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# **THE NEW METAPHYSICS**

MORRISON AND GIBB, EDINBURGH,  
PRINTERS TO HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

# THE NEW METAPHYSICS

OR

UNIV. OF  
CALIFORNIA

## THE LAW OF END, CAUSE, AND EFFECT

*WITH OTHER ESSAYS*

BY

FRANK SEWALL

"

JAMES SPEIRS

36 BLOOMSBURY STREET, LONDON

1888

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Gift of  
Mrs. S. Emerson

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## TO THE READER.

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IN the following pages I have discussed a theme as old as philosophy itself, and in terms worn threadbare by ages of controversy. It is only because I believe there is something substantially new in the argument here presented, and that even the hackneyed language of metaphysics may yet be clothed with living meaning, that I venture to offer to the public this brief treatise.

I have included in the volume the essay entitled "A Drama of Creation," and a number of other Articles which have appeared in periodicals or as pamphlets, all of which bear directly on the theme which gives this volume its title.

FRANK SEWALL.

ROYAL TERRACE, CROSSHILL,  
GLASGOW, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1887.



## CONTENTS.

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	PAGE
TO THE READER, . . . . .	v

### THE NEW METAPHYSICS; OR, THE LAW OF END, CAUSE, AND EFFECT.

#### PART I.

##### INTRODUCTION.

Definition of Metaphysics—History of Metaphysical Research—What lies beyond Matter?—Unity of all Being sought for—Monism and Dualism—The Monist's Difficulty—Present Monism Materialistic—Opposites Meet—Dualism—Dualist's Difficulty—Idea, Sensation, Substance—Locke's Doctrine of Substance—Agnosticism essentially Dualistic—Is there a Third Position?—Tendencies of Modern Thought toward a New View: I. Unity of Law; II. "Law in the Spiritual World;" III. Immanence of Deity, . . . . .	3-16
The New Metaphysics—Theology and Science—The Problem—Matter and Spirit—Defects in the Old Methods—How is certain Knowledge attainable?—Descartes—Hegel—Classification of Being, . . . . .	17-22

## PART II.

## THE DOCTRINE OF DISCRETE DEGREES.

	PAGE
The Discrete Degrees—End, Cause, Effect—Degrees in Series—Continuous Degrees—Illustrative Diagrams—Discrete Degrees are Three—Degrees of Comparison <i>versus</i> Degrees of Production—Simultaneous and Successive Order—End, Cause, and Effect Inconvertible—Mistaken for Continuous Degrees—Leibnitz, Plato—Christian Materialism—The Hylic School—Discrete Degrees a New Doctrine—John Stuart Mill on Cause and Effect—Danger of Pantheism—The Solution Offered—Degrees of Substance <i>versus</i> Matter—The One Substance—Discrete Degrees Universal—Examples of Discrete Degrees—Will, Understanding, Exercise—Endeavour, Force, Motion—Living Forces—Love, Wisdom, Use—Perfection of the Universe, . . . .	23—46

## PART III.

## THE DOCTRINE OF DISCRETE DEGREES AS APPLIED TO THE CREATION AND THE EXISTENCE OF THE WORLD.

Degrees in Existence—Degrees in Creation—How Being Exists—Atmospheres—Degrees of Divine Existence—Matter is not “all that Exists”—Degrees of Substance—Matter and Substance—What is Matter? . . . .	47—53
Theology the Science of the End—What makes a World?—Two Worlds; Two Suns—Time and Space: how Created—Origin of Matter—The End of Creation—Nature is not God—Uses of Creation produced through the Earths—Ends in Effects—Love the Creator—Love demands an Object—God and the “not-God”—Creation	

## *CONTENTS.*

ix

	PAGE
proceeding by Spheres—Time and Space Necessary— Man's Immortality—The End of Creation, where attained —Substances Spiritual—What makes Matter real?—The Existence of Matter—Form and Substance—Matter a Means to a Divine End—Discrete Classification of Knowledge—Physics, Metaphysics, and Theology— Limitations of Physics—Sublime Uses of Physics— Living <i>versus</i> Dead Science—Union of the Sciences— The Science of the End—Revelation, . . . . .	54-79
<i>Résumé</i> —Infinity and Eternity—God the Inmost—Con- tinuous Degrees in each Discrete Degree—The Key to Causes—Knowledge of Degrees—The Problem Solved— Esse, Existere, Procedere—Auras and Atmospheres— The Mineral Basis—The Angelic Heavens—The Uni- verse is End, Cause, and Effect—The End of Creation attained—Diagram illustrative of Creation by Discrete Degrees in Descending and Ascending Order, . . . . .	80-92

---

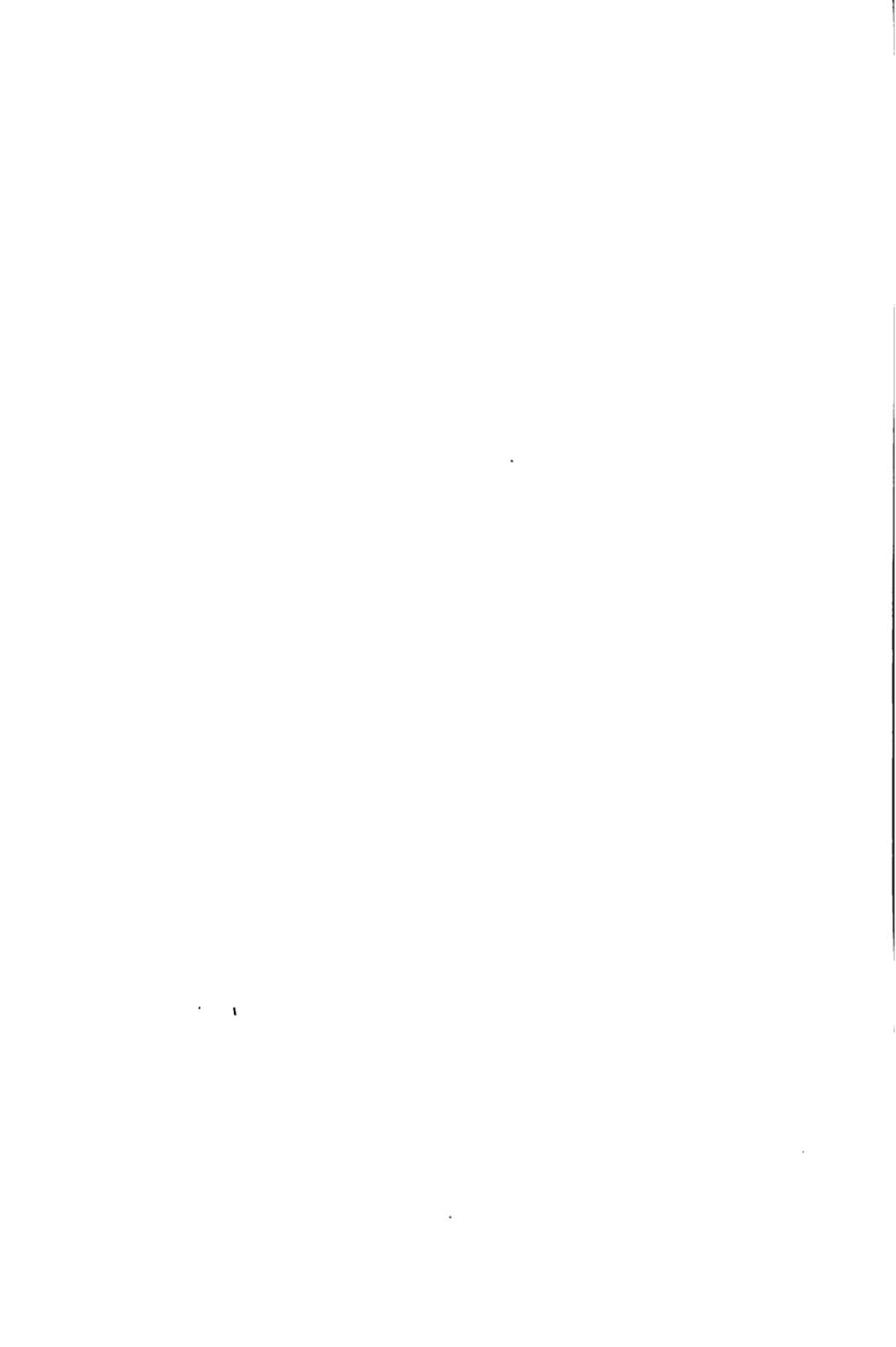
### THE WORD: IN CREATION, IN REDEMPTION, IN HUMANITY—

Pre-Christian Doctrines of the Logos, . . . . .	96
The WORD in Creation, . . . . .	97
The WORD in Revelation, . . . . .	101
The WORD in Redemption, . . . . .	103
The WORD as God Present, . . . . .	106
The WORD in the World's History, . . . . .	108
The WORD in the New Creation, . . . . .	110
The Spiritual Sense of the WORD, . . . . .	112

*CONTENTS.*

	PAGE
THE PHILOSOPHY OF SWEDENBORG, . . . . .	117-141
<b>THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE—</b>	
Goldwin Smith on the Progress of Science—Preponderance of Physical Studies—A New Prometheus—The Weakest go down—Herbert Spencer's New Basis of Ethics—Religion of Industrial Arts—The Educational Use of Science—The Survival of the Strongest—How to get Wisdom from Science—The Utilization of Science—Morality of the Past—What is our Duty? . . . . .	145-158
THE PERSONALITY OF GOD A LOGICAL NECESSITY, . . . . .	161-170
A DRAMA OF CREATION, . . . . .	173-208

## **THE NEW METAPHYSICS.**



# THE NEW METAPHYSICS.



## PART I.

### INTRODUCTION.

IF we take the meaning of *Metaphysics* to be that which appears from the original use of the term by Aristotle, where, after treating of nature or *τὰ φυσικά*, he discusses other topics under the title *Τὰ μετὰ τὰ φυσικά*, “after” or “beyond the physics,” a sufficiently clear idea will be had of the sense in which the term is used in the present treatise.

What lies beyond this physical, visible, and tangible world of nature? If anything, then its realm is the subject of metaphysics; the laws that govern it; the relations it sustains to the world of tangible things,—these we shall hold to be the proper subjects of metaphysical investigation.

Understood in this sense metaphysics is a thing quite distinct from those vague creations of the mind which have for so long a time borne this name, and brought it into discredit with practical thinkers. To be metaphysical has only too often been held to mean the same as to be obscure, in the clouds, speculative, not practical.

Perhaps there have been sufficient causes in the past for the wide prevalence in our day of this prejudicial notion. It shall be my attempt to remove this burden of misconception and prejudice, and to deal with our subject as one that is not only of practical import, but capable of being clearly comprehended in every step.

But besides being something more than a name for any kind of cloudy speculation, metaphysics at the same time is to be considered a branch of study quite distinct from other forms of abstract research. Thus it is not identical with philosophy, although a branch of it. While all metaphysics is philosophy, all philosophy is not metaphysics. Treating indeed of things of spirit and mind as lying "beyond the physics," yet is metaphysics not psychology, for this treats of the nature and laws of spirit as exhibited in the individual human subject, while metaphysics treats of spirit or mind in its operations in nature at large. And further, we must distinguish between metaphysics and spiritual or revealed knowledge in general, since the latter has a religious bearing, while the former is strictly and impassively scientific in its scope and application.

The history of metaphysics has been that of a fruitless effort—

*First,* To find what if anything lies beyond matter, or even our sense of it;

*Second,* How is that Beyond connected with the physical substance we feel, see, and hear?

The Beyond may occupy either of two relations. The soul may speak of the body as its "beyond;" the body may say the same of the soul or of the power that wills, thinks, acts, and feels in it; but the term meta-

physics plainly means a search for *that which lies beyond matter*, or the physical world.

Philosophy from its very first has sought to establish as a principle the unity of all being, and to resolve all things, however multiform and manifold in appearance, into a single, permanent, self-existent, eternal One. That the search began from physical knowledge as the starting-point denotes indeed that to its view the world beyond meant all that part of human experience which exhibited mental force or the power of ideas. The relation of this to the world of matter became a foremost question.

Two positions resulted from this inquiry—

The one, purely philosophical, of Monism ;

The other, religious and popular, of Dualism.

Between these two the thinking world has ever been and still is divided. After twenty-five hundred years of philosophizing, men still have to admit their failure to arrive at an answer which shall be satisfactory to all, to the questions : What is matter? what is mind? Let us briefly examine these two positions respectively.

To make mind and matter identical, to say that the thinker and the thing thought of, the subject and the object of sensation, are one and the same kind of substance, is a short way out of many difficulties, and one that is warranted by some of the deepest and most important maxims of both philosophy and religion. God is the All. God is one. All things are therefore one in Him ; and things that are unlike and opposed, as matter and spirit, in Him—the One—lose their unlikeness, and are resolved into the one and the same. Matter is the world extended ; mind is the world thinking. In God who is spirit, and in whom all being is all intelligence,

the two become one. So taught Descartes and his followers. Spinoza saw matter and spirit as only two modal substances, different only in relation to each other, but losing all difference in the Absolute and All from and in which they are. Aristotle ages before had said that things thought of became, as such, a part of the intelligent or thinking being himself, and thus the world may be resolved into intelligence. Before him Plato had shown how intelligence is the creative power which from pre-existent eternal ideas has created a world of corporeal things. Thus in the sweet sense of the unity of all with itself, and of the possibility of its being effected only by things similar to itself, the mind finds itself disposed to rest content with this theory of monism, quite willing to attribute the seeming opposition of spirit and matter, not to the absolute nature of things, but to our meanwhile ignorant apprehension of that nature.

Two unhappy facts come in to disturb this tranquil dream of the monists :

One is the twofold application of which the theory is capable of ;

The other the fatal result of either application when carried to the extreme.

Thus, if it be true that matter and mind are one and the same substance, it is evident that *the one* may as truly be matter as mind. Deity may be resolved into nature, mind into bodily sensation, and cause into mere atomic modes and forces. So the French school of the Materialists arose as a legitimate form or outgrowth of the monistic theory.

The German Idealists, on the other hand, with Leibnitz and Spinoza, resolved the world into God as into pure

spirit and ideal essence. Matter and spirit are one, but *the one* is spirit. The result was only a return of the fallacies of the Greek Sophists. If mind is all, and thought and being are one, then the world is what I think it: and as no two minds agree, it follows that there is no real absolute world.

Certain knowledge must give way therefore to opinion in all things. Not knowledge, but doubt, is the normal state of the mind, and the world and even our own existence resolve themselves into a mere succession of dreams and guesses.

The monism of to-day belongs rather to the materialistic than to the idealistic school. When Huxley says that it is a matter of indifference whether we express the facts of matter in terms of mind or the reverse, he implies that the essence is one, only figuring under different names. The remarkable changes which the physical sciences have been recently undergoing, all show this one philosophical tendency to monism, although of a materialistic kind. "L'atome et la force; voilà l'univers!" exclaims Saigey in *La Physique Moderne*. The Conservation of Energy, the Equivalence and Transmutation of Forces, the Equation of Physical and Mental Forces, the reduction of even the moral impulses of man, and thus of the whole sphere of ethics and religion, to purely material origins, and the establishment of their mechanical equivalents, all these are strictly monistic theories.

Thus the most opposite schools of thought really meet in the philosophic goal of monism. They necessarily converge to this so far as they are impelled by the genuine philosophic spirit,—the search for the principle of unity in all things. The three most divergent schools

in modern philosophy have been, perhaps, the Materialists and Sensationalists of France, as represented by Helvetius and the *Système de la Nature*; the Idealists of Germany, from Spinoza to Hegel; and as the offshoot of these, the Scepticism of Hume and his followers in England. Unlike as these are in their dealing with phenomena, they all agree in asserting the essential oneness and sameness of spirit and matter, under whatever difference of manifestation and appearance.

The religious and the popular bent of the human mind has, on the other hand, always been toward Dualism, or the assertion of the absolute separation and unlikeness of matter and spirit. As religion has placed at variance God and man, the spirit and the flesh, grace and nature, heaven and the world, so has the popular mind always readily accepted the relation of the seen and the unseen worlds as one of utter and irreconcilable separation and antagonism. Everything pertaining to mind, spirit, and soul essentially constitute an "other world;" a world which "flesh and blood do not inherit," and which being incorruptible can never be invaded by that which is subject to corruption. Even when the ideas of spirit are only such as are themselves grossly material, as in the worship of savage tribes, and in the various sects of Spiritists and necromancers ancient and modern, as well as in the ordinary ghost-lore of all climes and ages, the line seems to be no less distinctly drawn between spirit-substance and world-substance. That the distinction is essentially an *ideal* one is evident from the fact that an apparition, at first mistaken for a being of flesh and blood, becomes an object of terror only when known to belong to and to have come from the "other world."

But apart from all superstitious and abnormal impressions, the natural tendency of all minds is to regard mind and matter as unlike and distinct. A certain substantial quality is attributed to matter which is denied to mind, while yet the world of notions has an existence which is never disputed. How these two are related is not yet inquired into. To do this would demand an inquiry into the nature of the respective worlds or planes of experience, which inquiry itself arises from a philosophic impulse. It is here in this position of dualism, then, as in its natural status, that philosophy finds the mind, and as education and disposition favour, seeks to lead it up to monism as its goal. Meanwhile the senses and the religious instincts all tend to dispute this principle of the unity of mind and matter. There seems to be something profane in this commingling of the finite with the infinite, of the visible with the invisible, and something unlawful in breaking down the awful barrier set up in the nature of things.

That human speech is everywhere made up of physical and corporeal terms applied to things purely immaterial and mental, is as *natural* a circumstance as that men's souls should act through the bodies given them for the purpose; it is not an evidence of the identity of the two sets of things, but only of their perfect correspondence. It is impossible indeed to leave revelation entirely out of the account in considering what the purely natural or savage mind would conclude as to the relation of spirit and body, until, at least, we can prove that at any given period there had never been a previous revelation of supernatural knowledge to man. But without implication of formal religious tenets, we may safely hold

that men, uninstructed in philosophy and even in states of considerable simplicity, provided they be not grossly brutalized or debased so as to render all normal mental action impossible, have a clear intuition of the difference between the reality of an idea and the reality of its material embodiments, and that only a long training in philosophical processes of thought will bring them to see that the thing and the idea of the thing are one and the same substance under various conditions.

But while the dualist is thus positive in his perception of the difference between spirit and matter, he is by no means to be called upon at random to define and prove it. Like most things of perception, this difference is known best by feeling it, and can only poorly be represented to intellectual sight. He thinks indeed he has made a clinching definition when he asks you if you know the difference between a "lamp-post in idea" and a "lamp-post which you run against in the dark,"—forgetting that all that the latter experience positively amounts to is, after all, an idea, or if you like better, a sensation of a "lamp-post run against in the dark." The latter idea is probably more vivid than the mere idea of a lamp-post in general. It is a more particular idea in that it is an idea of vastly more reality and more hardness and impenetrability as belonging to that particular lamp-post. But what the experimental philosopher carries away from the experience is not the lamp-post but the "idea of a lamp-post" after all. What that something is which lies behind the sensation and constitutes the separate and absolute substance of matter itself, the unlettered observer does not presume to define. He is willing "to take the evidence of his senses," and, ignoring

entirely the old difficulty which the Greek philosophers experienced in reasoning from the like to the unlike, he readily attributes to these material substances themselves that which his sensations tell him about them, as if the sensations belonged equally to the material object and his own mind. Thus he says the orange is sweet, round, yellow, soft, when really these are only the sensations which his own mind has received in regard to the orange. What is the orange apart from or beyond these his own sensations? Do we know that it is anything?

The difficulty becomes the more embarrassing when we take into consideration the *source* of our knowledge. If it be true that all the knowledge of the mind comes through the senses, then the limit of our senses is the limit of our knowledge, and our knowledge of the orange then becomes limited to the knowledge of our sensations of it. These we have seen to be the several sensations of sweetness, roundness, etc. But these do not make up the substance itself of the orange.

Has then the orange no substance but only the qualities belonging to a substance? The qualities are all that the senses convey to us. They are all that we can attribute to the thing itself. Then the thing itself we can never know! Shall we now deny its existence altogether?

If we do this, it is clear that we are no longer dualists. We have in the twinkling of an eye gone over to the monists in spite of all our protests and abhorrence. If there is nothing beyond our sensations of things, then matter is only modified sensation, and all things are one in substance after all.

But the dualist does not thus readily abandon his theory. Two positions still remain to him. One is that

of the vantage ground he finds in Locke's doctrine of the intuitive knowledge of substance ; the other is the kind of *dernier ressort* which is afforded him in modern Agnosticism. Locke, in his doctrine of the Human Understanding, while laying down the general principle, *nihil in intellectu quod non in sensu*, that there is nothing in the intellect which was not previously in the senses, excepts one very important idea, namely, that of substance, or the combined, total impression of an object which, while the resultant of all its separate impressions, nevertheless is composed by a process of mind, and is not itself conveyed to the mind by any distinct sense. In other words we have an intuitive perception of substance but no distinct sense of it, as we have a sense of hardness, roundness, sweetness, etc. From this we infer two important points ; one that the mind has the power of *originating and constructing ideas which cannot come through the senses, and thus cannot be the product of an external world* ; and secondly, unless our whole mental apparatus is organized to deceive rather than to inform, there *must be in the external object* a substance wholly distinct from and exactly corresponding to that which the mind has constructed in itself.

Both of these conclusions are distinctly dualistic. Proceeding in the same manner, the mind projects into the whole objective world a distinct, substantial reality, and then builds up its two kingdoms of being, wholly unlike in substance, but equally real and necessary—the world of matter and the world of mind. It is not to be supposed that this discrimination between the subjective and objective worlds, or that this or that process of proving the reality of the latter is consciously entered into

by the mind every time the judgment is formed. It is not reflection but an instantaneous perception which yields this conviction of the duality of mind and matter; but an examination of the mind in its operation enables us to see on what kind of experience this perception is based. The beholder *perceives* the external world as *real*. From the reality of this perception he infers intuitively the reality of the external world.

The other position to which the dualist may resort for the maintenance of the theory is that of the present Agnostic,—a position which, while deserving a place in the records of critical thought, cannot truly claim a place in philosophy.

The claim of the Agnostic is one that is essentially and entirely unphilosophic; instead of arguing for the unity of knowledge and the reconciliation of the two elements, matter and spirit, it proclaims their absolute and unending variance, and utters the cry of the final despair of more than a one-sided, ever incomplete and misleading knowledge of things. Agnosticism is dualistic in that it emphatically declares that beyond the veil of sensation there *is* a world of reality; but it is unphilosophic because in the same breath it declares that what that reality *is* can never be known, and that consequently neither can the intercourse of that reality with the sensible world be known. To know that an absolute being *is*, without knowing what it *is*, is, philosophically, to despair of the very centre and source of all true and satisfying knowledge. To know that there exists a world of which we know nothing *is*, at the same time, to admit the extreme of dualism; since nothing could more essentially separate two worlds of being than the fact that the

one is knowable to our mental organization and the other is absolutely not so.

Such then is the division we find existing in human philosophy and opinion after two thousand years of metaphysical investigation regarding the actual world of being : on the one hand, the monists claiming that mind and matter are one and the same ; on the other, the dualists claiming that they are distinct.

Is there a third position, or can there be a new metaphysics ?

The present age has not only exhibited a revival of metaphysical study, which is in striking contrast with the practical and materialistic tendencies so generally characteristic of our time ; but the turn which metaphysical thought has taken has been plainly in the direction of that which I shall attempt to show is verily a new solution of the long-contemplated problem.

This favourable disposition of contemporary thought is manifested,

First : in the general recognition of the *Unity of Law*. The physicists have made the unity of nature and the correlation of all the forces of nature a fundamental principle in all modern and scientific research. While the Agnostic school among them have been compelled to stop short of extending this law of unity into the world of the unknown Cause, and thus have been compelled to seek their basis of unity in some of the ever-varying phenomena of the sensible world, the other and a growing division are ready to adopt as the principle of this unity in nature the unity of the supernatural Power and Law, and so to make all scientific progress contribute to real metaphysical knowledge.

Meanwhile a distinct class of writers, possessed of elevated perceptions and the power of wide generalization, of whom the Duke of Argyll and Professor Drummond in Great Britain, Professor Janet in France, and Professor Hermann Lotze in Germany are notable examples, have undertaken to extend the reign of natural law into the spiritual world, in so far, at least, as to show that beneficence, justice, intelligence, and love are qualities discernible in the laws by which alike the physical and spiritual worlds are created and governed. To unify the laws by which worlds are governed is to bring the worlds themselves into the most practical and real contact, and to subject them to the view of a common knowledge. When this unification of all law is accomplished, there would seem to be but one principle still lacking, namely, that from which the law itself acquires its unity, or that ground which still lies behind a single Law for all worlds.

A second favourable disposition we find in a tendency involved indeed in that which we have just described, but forming a distinctly new feature in it. It is the recognition which the idea of "law in a spiritual world" implies, namely, that the spiritual is itself not only "another world," but that it is a substantial world in the truest sense.

This leads to a renewed investigation of the nature of substance and its relation to matter. Unlike the ancient Platonic inquiry based on the postulate of the primary ideal substance, the process is now reversed, and from the reality of matter, and the sure indications of law therein, the reality of a spiritual world, a realm of substantial ideas and of physical force is inferred. The study of

law in its objective forms, which has been the supreme mission of modern science, thus lends a very positive aid to the new metaphysics in having so closely identified law with the subject-matter of law.

For even though the error be committed of reducing to a single continuous plane things which occupy two planes quite distinct, in thus confounding a law with the subject-matter in which it is exhibited, still there is a gain when the principle of unity extends the domain of law into the spiritual world; for the notion of law carries necessarily with it that of a substance in which it operates, and "law in a spiritual world" suggests substances and forces there which are the subjects of law.

A third favourable disposition of modern thought toward a new departure in metaphysics lies in the theological conception of the *Immanence of Deity*. God in a world as at once its Life, its Order, its Law, and its End or controlling Purpose, rather than God *over* a world as its long-ago Creator and its far-away Ruler and Judge, is the form of teaching which seems to be everywhere gaining ground among thoughtful and earnest theologians. The immanence of God in the world is worthily attended by its grand correlative doctrines of the immanence of Deity in the humanity of Christ, and of the immanence of Christ Himself or the Word in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, as their genuine and only Inspiration and the source of their Unity and Power.

Whether upon the basis of dualism or monism, these characteristics of modern thought all favour a reconstruction of the fundamental notions of the nature of matter

and spirit, of the world and its cause, of the visible and the invisible, and of the relations which these mutually sustain.

I have ventured therefore to apply the title, The New Metaphysics, to a theory which attempts the solution of these ancient problems on a line of thought never, I believe, hitherto applied, and by a method which coincides harmoniously with the recent philosophic tendencies above described.

The theory is that propounded by Swedenborg in his doctrine of Discrete Degrees, or of End, Cause, and Effect.

The history of this doctrine, as developed in the writings of this author, would form a treatise by itself, and cannot be examined in detail here. It will suffice for our purpose to state that while, as a philosophic theory or "working hypothesis," it was propounded in the scientific and philosophical works of Swedenborg, notably in the *Animal Kingdom*, yet it never received its full corroboration, and became established as a universal *doctrine* applying to both the natural and the spiritual worlds, until its definition in the theological writings, particularly in the work entitled *Divine Love and Wisdom*.<sup>1</sup> The author nowhere names it a metaphysical law—the term *metaphysics* being one which enters very rarely into his vocabulary. To him all theology, all philosophy, all science were so veritably one grand theatre of the Truth, that the use of any terms indicative of conflicting planes of truth, or of truth as theory unembodied in facts, was repugnant. The law of Discrete Degrees is a distinct theological doctrine in

<sup>1</sup> *Sapientia Angelica de Divina Sapientia et de Divino Amore.*

Swedenborg, but not a whit the less a scientific principle applicable to every phase of physical phenomena. Our reason for denominating it a new metaphysical law is that the object of this essay is to show how this doctrine may be actually applied to present questions, and to present modes of thinking, which, with a view to general comprehension, may best be designated metaphysical. Unfortunately, but undeniably, such is the present status of thought in the learned world, that to term a doctrine or law theological, is to imply at once that it is not applicable to physical science; while the term scientific means, to the popular ear, that which, first of all, is not "theological." The conception of all science as theological, because theology is the supreme science, is one which would render the name and the study of metaphysics unnecessary, but it is not a conception which prevails in the thought of to-day, and we must choose our terminology accordingly.

What, then, is the problem which the new metaphysics proposes to solve? What is the solution it offers; and with what authority?

The problem is that of the old difference between the monists and the dualists: What is matter? What is spirit? Are they one or two kinds of being? And what relation do they bear to each other? In answer, the monist said, They are one; the dualist said, They are two.

The new metaphysics says, They are one, and yet distinct; or, to use our author's own expression, they are distinctly one—*distincte unum*.

To the question, How are they related? the monist said, Their relation is that of essential identity, but apparent difference.

The dualist said, They are apparently one, but in reality they are totally unlike. We can only perceive and admit their mutual influence; we can never explain it, since to explain it would be to show what connection exists between kinds of being which, having nothing in common, can have no connection.

The new metaphysics says, They are one, and at the same time distinct; and they are related as effect and cause, and by a law which is called correspondence.

The worth of the solution which the new metaphysics thus offers will appear not in the terms in which it is propounded, for these are in nowise new or unhackneyed, but in the definition of these terms and in the degree of authoritative force they derive by virtue of this definition. In other words, the explanation of the modes of being and their relation will be sought in a definition of being itself, and in such a definition as is necessarily implied in the very notion itself of being.

In the solutions of the problem which philosophy has hitherto offered, there has always been this defect, that the proportion offered has had two members,—one, the necessary postulate growing out of the nature of the subject discussed; the other, that which has only an apparent but no real being, and stands in no logical, but in only an arbitrary relation to the necessary postulate.

Thus, in monism, the necessary postulate is the oneness and the identity of all being; but this was compelled to admit to its companionship an apparent other being—that of the apparent and manifold world—the creation, not of logic, but of the senses.

In dualism, on the other hand, the necessary postulate is that of the utter unlikeness and non-connection of the

20    *DEFECTS IN THE OLD METHODS.*

two worlds, while the illogical fact, based on the experience of the senses, but wholly unexplainable to the reason, is that matter acts on spirit and spirit on matter, and that things perceived are at least connected with the perceiving agent, if not in some sense one and the same with it.

In the definition of being offered in the new metaphysics, the whole, not dual, but trinal, constitution of being flows alike from that which is involved in the notion of being itself. If one plane or degree is a necessary postulate, the other two are equally so; and if the postulate "something is," or "something exists," is a necessary one, then the three planes of that being or existence are an equal necessity. Is there, then, such a definition of being to be found in our notion of being itself that shall resolve being into three distinct planes or degrees, each of which is as clearly manifest and as logically necessary as the general notion of being itself?

The evolution of a world by a process of logic from a fundamental single idea is no new process in metaphysics. The Pythagoreans built up a world out of number. "Atoms and motion," in no visible but a purely ideal conception of them, are the simple raw material out of which our modern scientists avow their readiness to build not only human brain, but human thought, will, moral sense, and all. The success of these efforts must depend on the degree in which the laws laid down by Descartes and Pascal, on clearness of thought and certainty of knowledge, are obeyed. We must, it is evident, start with some proposition that is clearly indisputable, such as the fundamental one, "Something is;" and the clearness and certainty of this must be the standard by which to measure the clearness and certainty of every proposition that follows.

If deductions from a fundamental statement can be unfolded, logically or otherwise, in such a way that they are all equally clear and certain as that from which we start, then we may so far arrive at certain knowledge; and if our deductions embrace the world in their scope, then we have a certain knowledge of the world.

It is well known that Descartes, starting with the fundamental proposition—which by himself could not be disputed—“*Cogito*,” *I think*, deduced not only the equally necessary and clear proposition, “*ergo sum*,” *therefore I am*, but built thereupon his proof of the existence of God, and then of the reliability of our knowledge of nature. This we may call the process of evolution by clear perception.

Hegel, on the other hand, affords us the remarkable instance, in modern philosophy, of a purely logical development of the conception of a world in all its widest variety and completeness out of the fundamental postulate of simple Being. It is unquestionably a system which embraces, more than others of modern make, the rich stores of ancient Platonism harmonized in a marvellous manner with the best results of modern idealism. In a true philosophic aim, it does not rest content so long as any field of human life is left out of its scope; and religion and the arts, as well as ethics and politics, find themselves duly ranged in its beautiful scheme. The conception of a divine Trinity and the dogmas of the Christian Church are even transformed into terms of this logical development. Above all, the great idea that a trinal process of existence, or of a trinity in unity, is involved in every logical syllogism, as *thesis*, *antithesis*, and *synthesis*, and this in every conclusion formed by the mind, approaches

more nearly than any of modern philosophy to the doctrine of Discrete Degrees, which forms the basis of the new metaphysics.

What, then, is the doctrine of Discrete Degrees as applied to the fundamental conception of Being? Granted that "something is," what follows of necessity from this supposition?

We have seen how Descartes, setting out from a fundamental thesis, proceeded to demonstrate an evolution *by clear perception*; and also how Hegel has done the same by the application of the *logical process of thought*; the process supplied by the new metaphysics we hold to be that of the *self-classification of being by interior gradation*. Its effort is not to develop the finite from the infinite, nor the many from the one, but to see what is enveloped in the idea of being itself, and how the infinitely many are truly necessary to the being of an Infinite One.

## P A R T   I I.

### THE DOCTRINE OF DISCRETE DEGREES.

**I**N all Being, whether universal or individual, there are necessarily implied three distinct elements, which are absolutely and entirely different, and which yet make a one. No unity of being can exist without this trine. "To be," even, when predicated of any existing thing, means to be these three.

These three are—**E N D**, **C A U S E**, and **E F F E C T**.

If we contemplate any object, we shall find that it is not a unit or a simple element in the sense that it is not resolvable into these three constituents. If all being, then, exists in these three discrete constituent planes or degrees, shall we not find in the relation of these constituents the real solution of the problem as to the nature and the mutual relation of mind and matter, or of the physical and the spiritual worlds?

Any object we contemplate presents to us in the very fact of its being, three constituent facts. It multiplies itself into three, not by a process of negation or antithesis, as in Hegel, or in Plato before him, nor by a borrowing of other being than itself, but by an actual interior analysis it discovers in itself these three—

First—The object existing as we see it, that is—the *Effect*.

Second—The reason of its being this, and not some other object, which reason is its interior forming principle or its *Cause*.

Third—That from which its being arose ; that which first moved to form it ; that which as Desire employed the reason as its forming instrument,—the *End*.

These three, then, are the constituent facts implied in the being of any existing thing, and equally in the idea of Universal Being itself. Whatever *is*, is *end*, *cause*, and *effect*. Without a cause there can be no effect : without an end, no cause.

The distinction may have to be drawn between actual being and mere verbal or predicated being. We may conceive, or at least may utter, a notion of being whose actual existence is impossible. We may say a “three-sided square,” but we cannot call a “three-sided square” a being or an object of thought or sense. So we may say “*End*,” or “*Cause*,” or “*Effect*,” meaning one of these terms as isolated, as absolutely self-existent, or wholly independent of the other two ; and yet we cannot really make it an object of our thought, and we cannot say that has actual being. No “*End*” has actual being unless it is the *End*—the desire and purpose of some ultimate object or effect, which again must require its intermediate and instrumental cause. Equally can no cause have actual being unless it implies both the end which prompted it and the effect it is to produce. Whether the effect be actually realized or not, it must at least be contemplated by us in order for us at the same time to contemplate

cause as *actual*. The same is true of our notion of effect. It demands the accompanying notions of end and cause, else it ceases to be an actual thing to our minds.

It does not follow that because an end, apart from cause and effect, cannot have actual existence, therefore these three may not exist as true units, having each its own constituent degrees of end, cause, and effect. The desire in a man's mind may be rightly called the end, which, through the reason of the intellect as cause, proceeds into bodily act as the effect; but in this case the desire, which, so far as man is aware, is the originating motive of the act, is itself an effect, involving its own higher and hidden cause and end in powers within and above its ken. Thus the spectacle of universal being is one of an infinite series of involutions, of trines within trines, each object brought into existence being the commencement of a new series or of a new evolution of end, cause, and effect, and yet without the possibility of the least confusion, with no dimness of outline, with no possibility of effacing these eternal distinctions—these discrete degrees fixed in the very nature of being—end—cause—effect.

That which constitutes the lowest degree in one series may be the highest in a consequent series. The emotion produced in Charles' mind is at once the effect of Henry's appeal, and the end of his own subsequent resolution and act. Even on the material plane there is a succession of these series of ends, causes, and effects, one beneath the other; and thus, "All effects or ultimate ends become anew first ends in a continual series from God the Creator, who is the First, to the conjunction of man with Him,

which is the last. That all ultimate ends become anew first ends is evident from the fact that there is nothing so inert and dead but has some efficiency in it, even the particles of sand exhaling that which helps to produce, and thus to effect something.”<sup>1</sup> And as each individual or smallest thing is resolvable into its trine of degrees, so is each largest form of being, even to universal being itself. Thus worlds exist, not only as comprising in themselves the three degrees, but also as constituting each its several degree in a larger series. The physical world is effect, or the lowest degree, in a trine, embracing the spiritual world as cause, and God as End. But the physical world is again divisible into its discrete planes of being, which stand related to each other as end, cause, and effect. Similarly is the spiritual world divisible into its three planes in their successive order; and at last Deity Itself also exists in its own three Divine but discrete degrees, which is the eternal Trinity—“as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end.”

To avoid a misconception of this doctrine of degrees, it is necessary that we arrive at a clear understanding of what is meant by the terms, end, cause, and effect, as applying to these degrees. The degrees are named “discrete degrees” in distinction from “continuous,” because they are regarded as planes of existence entirely separate and distinct from each other, and absolutely incapable of being intermingled, blended, or in any way resolved one into another. That the three degrees are distinct is quite as important a fact regarding them as that they are or make a one. On this absolute distinctness or separate-

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Love and Wisdom*, No. 172.

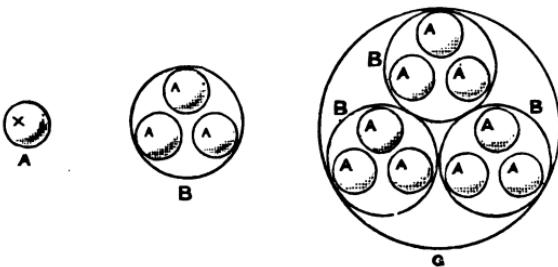
ness of the degrees rests their ability to make a one, and thence to explain the unity of all being.

A continuous degree is a variation of being or quality on its own plane, as from heavier to lighter, denser to rarer, etc. Being on one plane, these degrees are also named degrees of latitude. It is extension, succession, or multiplication of the same element. The three "degrees of comparison," positive, comparative, and superlative, apply to the continuous degrees, because they state the variation of an object which remains the same in kind or quality. If we say "the sky is bluer than the violet," the comparison is not between the different things, "sky" and "violet," but between the degree of blueness existing in each. Thus the continuous degrees never reach above their own single plane of being or quality. They are more or less, but not of different, but always of the same thing.

Discrete degrees, on the other hand, are never of the same, but always of entirely different forms or qualities of being. Even though they are homogeneous in substance, and do actually differ in quantity, and so differ by comparative or by continuous degrees, still their being discrete consists in the absolutely new and clearly distinct form or kind of being which each different degree assumes. Thus, if we regard the point, the line, and the surface comparatively, we might say that these differ in consisting of one or more "points," or in the longer or shorter "motion of a point," according to the definition we adopt; this would be a comparison by continuous degree, the point being the standard of measurement. But if we regard the line as a thing wholly distinct from a point, although existing only by means or out of points, and if

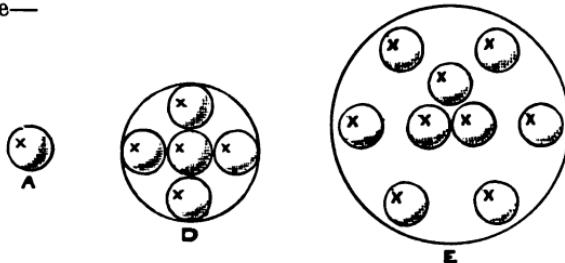
we regard a surface as a thing wholly distinct from both point and line, and yet existing wholly from these, we shall then be regarding the surface itself in its *three discrete degrees*,—the source *from* which it is, the means *by* which it is, and the effect or the resulting thing itself.

It will be noticed that the line as line is wholly different from a point, although the product of a point. It differs as line from point by a discrete degree by thus being a distinct thing from one substance or source. But if we regard the line not as a line, but merely as more points than one, then it differs from the point not by a discrete, but by a continuous degree. If we arrange marbles in a series thus : first, a single one, A ; second, three enclosed in a ring, B ; and third, three such rings inclosed in a larger ring, C—



then the relation of A, B, and C is that of discrete degrees. Although C, like B and A, is composed wholly of a homogeneous substance x, yet it is quite different from A, and is produced out of the x of A only by means of B's. Thus in C we may say that the three degrees are one and yet distinct. If now we take the elementary substance x, and simply multiply it without regard to the geometrical progression, but only by

indefinite accumulation of bodies like itself, we might have—



first, a single x element, A ; second, five x's arranged in symmetrical order in a ring, D ; third, nine x's arranged indiscriminately in a larger ring, E. The relation now of A, D, and E is that of continuous, but not of discrete degrees. If we compare the relation of E to A with that of C to A, in the series of discrete degrees, we shall see that while E, like C, is composed wholly of x's, and consists, like C, of nine x's, yet it is not produced by means of an intermediate B, as C is. There is no definite order of progression in which a third is produced by, and is dependent on a mediate. E can be constructed of A as well without as with such an intermediate as D.

We therefore arrive at this clearer understanding of the nature of discrete degrees, namely, that they must always exist in a series of three, the first of which is in the last by means of a mediate; or of which the first is in the middle, and the middle in the last. It is in this fact that the unity of the three figures lies—thus, not in their identity, but their absolute diversity while yet proceeding from a single source. In the last or lowest degree, the three are one, not by identity or confusion of substance, but by existing discretely, the first in the

mediate, and through the mediate in the last. While the body C is composed wholly of the element x, yet x is not in it immediately as A, but mediately as B, and except as A and as composing B, x could never be in and compose C. This, then, is the universal fact of discrete degrees, that the first must be in the mediate, and by the mediate in the last; and that so in the last the three make a one.

It will be noticed that in the above illustration of discrete degrees, only one kind or plane of objects has been considered. Our purpose has been to show as clearly as possible how the discrete degrees are related to each other, and thus how they differ from the continuous degrees; and in order to compare the two series of degrees, the discrete degrees were figuratively or geometrically represented as existing in one plane or kind, just as the continuous degrees must necessarily do. By comparing them thus on one plane, we have learned that the continuous degrees are degrees of comparison indicating the more or less of a certain thing or quality, whereas the discrete degrees are degrees of production, or of the development of an elementary first, through a mediate, into a last. Such an image of the discrete degrees lies in innumerable trinal series observable everywhere in the physical world, wherein an inmost is enveloped in a mediate, and so goes to construct a last. The fibres in every nerve, muscle, and viscus exist in this trinal order. A similar order of degrees is in every seed, in every fruit, and in every metal and stone, for they are successive compositions, or confasciculations and congregations from simples which are their first substances or materials.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, No. 207.

"The degrees of every subject and of every thing are *homogeneous* because they are produced from the first degree. The formation of them is such that the first, by binding together, rolling round, in a word by massing, produces the second, and by it the third ; and distinguishes each from the other by a superinduced covering. Hence it is evident that the first degree is the principal and the sole governing element in the subsequent ones. Consequently the first degree is in all the subsequent ones."

But "when it is said that degrees are of this nature with respect to each other, it is meant that the substances are such *in* their degrees. Speaking by degrees is speaking abstractedly, that is, universally, and thus in a way applicable to *any* subject or thing which is in such degrees."<sup>1</sup>

Because our illustration of the relation of the discrete degrees, both to each other and to the continuous degrees, is drawn on the preceding page from the material or geometrical plane, it must not therefore be inferred that it is only to this plane of things that these degrees apply. The application (of discrete degrees) may be made not only to muscles and nerves, to the matter and parts of the vegetable and mineral kingdoms, but "to the organic substances which are the subjects of the thoughts and affections in man, to the atmospheres, to heat and light, and to love and wisdom." Thus those things which are invisible and intangible, nay, those which are altogether of the mind or of a spiritual substance, and thus in no way subject to geometrical ratio or to molecular accumulation, are equally subject to the three discrete degrees. Of these equally with material or numerical subjects, it can be said that they possess a first principle, a mediate

<sup>1</sup> Nos. 195, 196.

### 32 SIMULTANEOUS & SUCCESSIVE ORDER.

and a last, and that the first by means of the mediate is in the last, and constitutes the all and only substance in the last. In this way the doctrine of discrete degrees extends not only to natural things, but to civil and moral and spiritual things, and to the whole and every part of them.

But besides learning to distinguish between the discrete degrees and those which are merely continuous, it is also necessary that we should understand that the discrete degrees may exist both in simultaneous and in successive order. When they are regarded as prior, posterior, and postreme, they are in successive order ; also when regarded as highest, inferior, and lowest ; but when regarded as inmost, interior, and outmost, they are in simultaneous order. Degrees in successive order may be represented by a column divided into three sections, called highest, inferior, lowest ; but if this column should subside into a plane, that which in successive order was the highest degree would in simultaneous order become the inmost, the inferior would become the exterior, and the lowest would become the outermost. Therefore, when referring to discrete degrees, whether the first degree is called the "inmost" degree, or the "highest" or "first" degree, will depend upon the order in which the degrees are regarded whether this be simultaneous or successive. That the first degree should be *before* the last in time or in successive order does not hinder its being the inmost *in* the last in simultaneous order.

These two facts regarding the nature of the discrete degrees are of the first importance when we come to apply the principle of these degrees in studying the nature of end, cause, and effect, viz. that the three degrees while existing, the one within the others, are

yet entirely distinct and inconvertible; and, secondly, that they exist in two orders, the simultaneous and the successive.

If we have now obtained a clear vision of these discrete degrees, we may proceed by means of them to examine more definitely the nature of end, cause, and effect; to establish their common relation, and so to apply our knowledge of these to the solution of the great metaphysical problem of the relation of mind to matter.

Recurring, then, to our fundamental proposition that in all being there is necessarily involved the trine of end, cause, and effect, we are now prepared to consider the question in which kind of degrees does this trine reside, since there are involved in all things also degrees of both kinds, continuous and discrete. Are, then, end, cause, and effect to be regarded as related according to the continuous or discrete degrees of being?

The fault in philosophy hitherto would seem to be in having regarded the end, cause, and effect as only the continuous degrees of a being. Under whatever name or classification, it is in reality as variations in degree of the same kind or quality, as being more or less dense or more or less refined, that end has differed from cause, and cause from effect. The monadology of Leibnitz, the atomistic theories of the Greeks, the pantheism of all ages, only repeat in different formularies the same fallacy that spirit and matter, Creator and created, are the same being, appearing and operating in different degrees of essential purity and sublimity. The soul weighed down with its grosser part is held to earth as by a law of natural gravitation even in Plato. Spirit or breath is air, and this is life; and the "ethereal heavens," if not the stars, are

the abode of the immortals. Even in Christian theology the same doctrine has been taught with whatever contradictory and illogical results, and so has influenced the whole current of modern philosophic thought, namely, that God is only a refined degree of matter. While it is true that God has been dogmatically defined as a being without "body, parts, or passions," yet in the same breath the Christian has had to declare his belief that God rose from the dead in a material body, and that this is the all-sufficient proof that man when about to enter his eternal home in heaven shall be raised from the dead in a material body also, and that, however purified and refined, this will still be the body that was buried and raised to life again. The only answer that the monistic philosopher at any period could give to the problem how mind could operate upon matter, has been the law that similars can touch and effect similars. Whether the monists, in order to apply this law, turned all matter into spirit, as did generally the idealistic school, or turned all spirit into matter, as did the materialists and sensualists, in order thus to bring the active and passive agent into the category of similars,—the result remained the same: matter and spirit, the world as caused and the world of causes, were essentially *similar*, differing only as grosser and more subtle, as denser and rarer, as visible and invisible. The degrees of being were thus regarded only as continuous or on the same plane, and their only relation and mutual connection was that of being indefinitely blended or fused together. The idea that substance is anything else than matter, while seemingly an old and familiar one, will be found to mean, as generally employed, that the substance

so referred to is only matter in a refined form. Not only did the earliest school of Greek philosophers, the so-called Hylic or Physical philosophers, seek, in this sense, for the underlying "substance" of the world, but the common idea of the masses from that day to this has been that a "spiritual body" is only a thin filmy *material* body such as one can see through! The philosophers have indeed in many schools of thought identified *substance* with Deity and with mental and spiritual entities, but they have not at the same time separated this substance from matter by a discrete degree, but made it rather continuous from matter by gradations of refinement or purity or of active force. This, I hold, is the reason why Swedenborg makes the remarkable declaration:—"Nothing, so far as I am aware, has hitherto been known of discrete degrees but only of continuous degrees; yet without a knowledge of both kinds of degrees, not anything of cause can be truly known." "He who thinks of creation not from discrete, but from continuous degrees, can see nothing of them but from effects and not from causes, and seeing from effects alone is seeing from fallacies."—*D. L. W.*, Nos. 187, 188. The fallacies have arisen not from a failure to distinguish between matter and spirit, or between effect and cause, but in regarding these as differing by continuous degrees only and not discrete degrees. Thus cause, however, distinguished from effect, was never lifted above the plane of effect, nor spirit above the plane of matter. They differed but by a continuous degree. So plainly did one of the deepest thinkers and ablest intellects of recent times, John Stuart Mill, see this identity of the planes of cause and effect as these have been defined hitherto, that he

boldly proposed to sweep away altogether the notion that there is any law of necessary connection between cause and effect, or any causing force in so-called "cause," and also that we have any substantial experience upon which to base our belief in "cause" of any kind, our whole knowledge and possible knowledge being confined to the mere fact of the succession of phenomena, and what we have called cause being only a more or less "invariable antecedent" to a certain observed phenomenon. If cause and effect differ only by continuous degrees, then nature is the cause of nature, and matter is the cause of matter. For the cause in continuous degrees is the same thing as the effect, only differing in subtlety or in power. Matter cannot be regarded as at once effect and cause, or if it is so regarded, then it is because cause and effect have reduced themselves only to Mill's "antecedents and consequents." When Tyndall, in his famous Belfast address, spoke of the primitive atom as having in itself the potency of future worlds, he either was treating of matter as effect only, or as constituting a continuous plane of effects, in which case he meant that the phenomena of creation present only a sequence of effects, the first atom being equally an effect and no more a real *cause* than the others, or else he meant that matter was self-causing, and thus at once cause and effect; but this is to obliterate all distinction between cause and effect, and to reduce these notions to that again of mere sequence of phenomena. Thus it would appear that Mill was quite right in affirming, as Swedenborg had done nearly a century before him, that from the plane of effects alone no knowledge of causes is possible.

Not only is the fallacy of the monists or pantheists to

be attributed to the recognition of only continuous degrees in all substance and being, but this error has been equally fatal to the reasoning of the dualists. These, as we have seen, have made it their principle to declare the absolute unlikeness and duality of matter and spirit, of the world perceived and the nature of the perceiver. Not only have they closed their eyes to their law of similars acting only on similars, but they have doubled the difficulty of the problem by indefinitely extending each on its own plane, without the remotest possibility of their mutual approach or influence. Instead of matter and spirit, indeed, constituting one continuous plane, they do rather constitute two such planes, but without any explicable relation. Cause or spirit is continuously extended as cause, but like the gods of Epicurus without any perceptible or admissible relation to a lower world of effects; and effects remain for ever the distinct, but, so far as philosophy can tell, uncaused effects of a continuous world or plane of matter. That the relation of the two planes is a genitive one, cause being always and only cause of effect, and effect being always and only effect of cause, while doubtless admitted as a form of speech, was nevertheless not seen to afford any bridge over the chasm which divides the two irreconcilable facts of being.

To the difficulties thus resulting from an attempt to explain the relation of matter and spirit from a recognition of only continuous degrees as inherent in universal being, the New Metaphysics now offers a solution in the doctrine of the three discrete degrees—their nature, their mutual relation, and their resemblance to end, cause, and effect. I say their resemblance to end, cause, and effect rather than their identity with these,

because while end, cause, and effect are the actual constituents of all being, and in relation to each other are the three discrete degrees of being, still the existence of the three discrete degrees in a single plane of being (as, for instance, in a muscle or a nerve, which is a body composed of *grouped* and these of *simple* fibre) might not seem at first glance to exhibit any real relation of end, cause, and effect. In other words, it would seem to reduce end, cause, and effect again only to a single plane of being, and thus to a continuous degree. The language of Swedenborg is therefore careful to describe the three discrete degrees as being like, or "as end, cause, and effect" (*D. L. W.* 193), and "in the relation of end, cause, and effect" (184). For, as shown above, degrees are relations applicable to substances; they are not the substances themselves. The simple fibre is related to the fascicle of fibres as end to cause, and the fascicle to the composite or muscle as cause to effect, but in reality the end is *in* the simple fibre, the cause is *in* the fascicle or bundle formed of these, and the effect is in the *muscle* which these compose. Here again it is important that we avoid being misled by the doctrine of the homogeneity of the discrete degrees. That discrete degrees are always homogeneous, or of the same genius or nature, means that they are produced from the first degree in such way that the first degree is the principal and sole governing in the subsequent degrees (195), and that they are thus "concordant" (214). It does not mean that the last degree is the same thing or substance as the mediate, nor the mediate the same as the first, but that the mediate and the last are such as they are by virtue of their relation to a common first. Thus the fibre is not first or end except in relation to the composite

called muscle. In this trine fibre is first and as end ; but as a part of the material world it is a last in relation to a larger trine embracing a spiritual cause and a Divine end.

In studying discrete degrees we must accordingly first determine of what substance or being they are the degrees, or out of what first they are formed. If it be from a material first, it will be the three discrete degrees of a material object that we investigate, and these will be related *as* end, cause, and effect without being in reality end, cause, and effect. If the object of our examination be from a human will as a first or principle, then the trine will be that of the three degrees of human action—will, thought, action, which are again related *as* end, cause, and effect, without being these absolutely or in the highest sense. But if, on the other hand, we are considering Substance itself, and our first or principle be the true First or Essential Being itself, then the three discrete degrees will be the degrees of Being itself, and these will be not only *as* end, cause, and effect, but will be truly the end, the cause, and the effect, not only of all Being universally considered, but even of each least individual thing that exists. In Substance itself, therefore, the three discrete degrees are end, cause, and effect, while in all created or derived substances the three discrete degrees are *as* end, cause, and effect.

Applying now the doctrine of discrete degrees to the explanation of the relation of cause to effect and of spirit to matter, we shall, by recurring to our demonstration on a previous page, see clearly shown the following results. That while the end A is in the cause B and composes it, and by means of B is in the effect C and composes it, yet that C is neither A nor B nor like them,

but entirely distinct in form, that is, in composition, from both. Moreover, the end is in the cause B not as x merely, or as the primitive element repeated, but as the end A ; and the cause B is in the effect C not as a larger accumulation of x's [as in E], but as cause in which is the end. We are prepared, therefore, now to understand with perfect clearness the following statement of the law of end, cause, and effect.

“The end is all of the cause, and through the cause is all of the effect ; wherefore end, cause, and effect are called the first, the middle, and the ultimate end.

“Also the cause of the cause is likewise the cause of the thing caused.

“And there is nothing essential in causes but the end, and nothing essential in motion but effort ; and

“There is only one substance which is substance in itself.”<sup>1</sup>

The further statements can now be clearly understood.

“In every effect there are the three discrete degrees, for every ultimate or last consists of prior things, and these of a first, and every effect consists of a cause, and this of an end ; and the end is all of the cause, and the cause is all of the effect. The end constitutes the inmost, the cause the middle, and the effect the ultimate or last.”

“From the progression of ends and causes to effects, it manifestly appears that the ultimate or last degree is the complex, the continent and the basis of the prior degrees. That the effect is the aggregate, the container, the basis of the causes and ends, may be comprehended by enlightened reason ; but not so clearly that the end with everything belonging to it, and the cause with everything

<sup>1</sup> *D. L. W.*, No. 197.

belonging to it, actually exist in effect, and that the effect is their full complex. That this is the case may appear from the following considerations :—

“That one is from the other in a triplicate series ;

“That the effect is nothing but the cause in its ultimate ;” and

“That, as the ultimate is the complex, it follows that the ultimate is the continent and basis.”<sup>1</sup>

“All things which exist in the world of which the trinal dimension is predicated, or which are called compound, consist of degrees of altitude or discrete degrees. This is true of every muscle and nerve of the human body; of everything of the vegetable kingdom, and of everything of the mineral kingdom. In wood there is a gathering of the filaments in threefold order. In metal and stones there is a spherical arrangement of parts in a threefold order. Thus the nature of discrete degrees is shown, namely, that one is formed from another and by *means of* the second or third or composite; and that *each degree is discrete from the other*.

“These in their order are as ends, causes, and effects: for the first or least produces its cause by the intermediate, and its effect by the ultimate.” (190–193.)

“But this doctrine is of more ample extension: it reaches not only to natural things but to civil and moral and spiritual things, to the whole and to every part of them. This is true, *firstly*, because

“In everything of which anything can be predicated there is the trine which is called *end*, *cause*, and *effect*, and these three are to each other according to the degrees of altitude (*i.e.* the discrete degrees).

<sup>1</sup> *D. L. W.*, No. 212.

42 EXAMPLES OF DISCRETE DEGREES.

"Secondly, because everything civil, moral, and spiritual is not anything abstracted from substance but is substance. For as love and wisdom are not abstracted things but a substance, so in like manner are all civil, moral, and spiritual things. These indeed may be thought of abstractedly from substance, but still in themselves they are not abstracted.

"For example: Affection and thought, charity and faith, will and understanding, are not mere abstractions; for, like love and wisdom, *they do not exist* out of their subjects which are substances, but they are *states of subjects or substances*." (209.)

How the three discrete degrees exist in moral and spiritual things as well as in material things is thus shown:—

"As regards love and wisdom, *love* is the *end*, *wisdom* is the instrumental *cause*, and *use* is the *effect*; and *use* is the aggregate container and basis of wisdom and love, and such an aggregate and container that it actually contains the whole of love and the whole of wisdom, being the simultaneous existence of them.

"Again, in a series of similar degrees we find *affection*, *thought*, and *action*. For all affection refers to love, thought to wisdom, and action to use.

"*Will*, *understanding*, and *exercise* are in a series of similar degrees; for will is of love and thence of affection; the understanding is of wisdom and thence of faith; and exercise is of use and thence of work. Therefore as the whole of wisdom and love exist in use, so the whole of thought and affection exist in action; but they must be all homogeneous and concordant.

"That the ultimate of each series, use, action, and exercise is the complex and continent of all the prior principles,

has not hitherto been known. It appears as if there was nothing more in use, action, and exercise than there is in mere motion; but in reality all these prior principles, that is, will and understanding, affection and thought, are in them and entirely in them. They do not appear because they are viewed only exteriorly, and in this view they are *only* acclivities and motions. It is as when the arms and hands move themselves without our knowing that *a thousand* moving fibres concur in each motion, and that to these thousand moving *fibres* *a thousand things of thought and affection correspond* which excite the moving fibres, but which, because they act interiorly, do not appear to any of the bodily senses." (213-215.)

The relation of end, cause, and effect is again beautifully and with great force illustrated in the case of motion as the result of force and thus of endeavour.

"Endeavour does nothing of itself; it acts by forces corresponding to it, and *by these* produces motion." The endeavour is all *in* the forces, and through the forces *in* the motion; and as motion is the ultimate degree of endeavour, it is by motion that endeavour reaches its efficacy. And yet endeavour is neither force nor is it motion. Nor is motion either force or endeavour, but simply motion. So end is never cause, and cause is never effect; nor is effect ever either cause or end, in its own series; and yet in the effect, and together with it, cause and end make one.

Endeavour, force, and motion are connected not by continuity, that is, by continuous degrees, but by *correspondence*, which is the connection of discrete degrees. Endeavour ever so much increased is not force, and force ever so much increased is not motion; and yet

there is no force without endeavour, and no motion without force. These, endeavour and force, are in motion and constitute it, and yet are not it, but remain for ever what they are, namely, endeavour and force. Thus they are *discrete*, for ever apart, for ever absolutely themselves, and they belong to their ultimate, motion, and constitute a *one* in it by *discrete degrees*.

“Endeavour is not force, nor force motion ; but force is produced by endeavour, being endeavour excited, and motion is produced by force. Wherefore there is no potency in endeavour alone or in force alone, but in motion which is their product.” (218.)

Applying this illustration to living forces : “The living *endeavour* in a man, who is a living subject, is his will united to his understanding ; the living *forces* in him are what constitute the interiors of his body, in all of which there are moving fibres variously interwoven ; and living *motion* in him is action, which is produced through those forces by the will united to the understanding.

“The interiors of the will and understanding constitute the first degree.

“The interiors of the body constitute the second degree ; and

“The whole body, which is their complex, constitutes the third degree.

“It is well known that the interiors of the mind have no potency but by forces of the body, and that forces have no potency but by action of the body.

“These three do not act by continuity, but discretely ; and to act discretely is to act by correspondences.

“The interiors of the mind *correspond* to the interiors of

the body, and the interiors of the body to its exteriors, by which actions exist ; wherefore the two former are in potency by means of the exteriors of the body.

“ It may seem as if endeavour and forces in a man are in potency, although there is no action, as in states of rest and in dreams. In these cases the determination of endeavours and forces falls on the *common moving forces of the body*, which are the *heart and lungs*. When the action of these ceases, the forces also cease, and the endeavour with the forces.” (219.)

That love, wisdom, and use constitute a trine of discrete degrees, and are respectively as end, cause, and effect, is evident from the fact that

“ A man’s *love* is the *end* of all things belonging to him, since which he loves, he thinks, he determines upon, and does ; consequently he has this for his end.

“ Wisdom is the cause : since he or the love which is his end seeks in his understanding for means by which he may arrive at his end ; thus he consults his wisdom, and those means constitute the instrumental cause.

“ Use is the effect.

“ But as love, wisdom, and uses vary in different men, and yet are homogeneous one with another, it follows that the character of the love determines the character of the wisdom, and these the character of the use performed. By wisdom is here meant whatever appertains to the understanding.” (241.)

It only remains to state that these degrees, in the relation of end, cause, and effect, exist in all things, in the least as well as the greatest, and as in man so also in Deity ; but that whereas in man they are finite, in Deity they are infinite.

"There are three infinite and uncreate degrees of altitude [*i.e.* discrete degrees] in the Lord, because the Lord is Love itself and Wisdom itself ; and being these, He is also Use itself, since love has use for its end, which it produces by wisdom." (230.)

"In God the Creator, who is the Lord from eternity, infinite things are distinctly one, and there are infinite things in His infinity, and in these infinitely infinite things there are degrees of both kinds, which are in Him distinctly one ; and as these things are in Him and all things are created by Him, and the things which are created represent in a certain image those things which are in Him, it follows that there is no finite thing, however minute, in which there are not such degrees. These degrees are equally in the least and in the greatest things, because *the Divine in the least and in the greatest things is the same.*" (223.)

"The perfection of the created universe consists in the similitude of generals and particulars, or of the greatest and least things, as to these degrees ; for then one has respect to another as its like, with which it may be conjoined for every use, *fixing and exhibiting every end in the effect.*" (227.)

"The 'greatest things' in which there are degrees of both kinds, are the universe taken as a whole, the natural world as a whole, and the spiritual world as a whole ; every empire and every kingdom as a whole ; everything civil, moral, and spiritual belonging to them as a whole ; the whole animal, vegetable, and mineral kingdoms, each in the aggregate ; and all the atmospheres of both worlds taken together, and their heat and light." (225.)

## PART III.

### THE DOCTRINE OF DISCRETE DEGREES AS APPLIED TO THE CREATION AND EXISTENCE OF THE WORLD.

MY reader will have noticed that everywhere in the doctrine I have been setting forth, stress is laid upon the fact that in all things, greatest and least, there are degrees of *both kinds*. The purpose of this insistence on a point so seemingly unimportant or so universally conceded as the existence of degrees of comparison, or continuous degrees in every subject, is to acquaint the reader with the fact that universal and necessary as is this presence of continuous degrees in all things, even so universal and necessary is the existence of *discrete* degrees; in other words, that it is as inherent in the idea of any thing as existing, that it should have a prior and a first standing in the relation of a cause and of an end, as it is that the object can be conceived of as more or less. This again is a re-statement of the principle we laid down as that distinctively of the new metaphysics, namely, that of the development or self-classification of being by interior gradation.

Everything in its very existence implies, as we have seen, two other things which, although one in it, are nevertheless entirely and for ever distinct—namely, its

own cause and its own end. Just as truly as these are involved in everything that exists, just so truly are they at the same time distinct from each other, and from the effect in which they are involved.

In all created things the three degrees are instrumental, or *as* end, cause, and effect, having reference always to a prior and infinite trine of degrees in Him who is the only and real Substance, in whom the End is truly the First Cause and the first degree inmostly hidden in all subordinate series of degrees involved in all created things even to the least.

As everything involves in its very existence, therefore, its cause in something prior to itself, and its end in something prior to its cause, let us apply this law to the existing universe or the visible world. Of this we may at least assert as a truth not to be disputed, that *it exists*. But if it exists, then it exists from a cause which is not itself, but is in itself, and this from an end which is not itself, but is in itself through the cause.

What is this cause which is in the visible or natural world without being natural itself? What is this end which is in the cause of the natural world, and so in the natural world without being itself either that cause or that world?

In other words, what are the discrete degrees of being which are necessarily involved or declared in the very existence of the natural world?

What plane of being is possible as being involved in physical being and actuating it as cause actuating effect, without yet being physical itself?

What plane of being is possible in this causal and actuating being, which at the same time is prior to it, and

the source of its causative and actuating force? The new metaphysics brings now its answer to these fundamental questions.

The natural or material world is the *effect* of which the *spiritual* world is the *cause*, and God is the *end*.

God the eternal and infinite Being, or the Substance of all things, *exists* by virtue of His own infinite trine of degrees, the Divine Love, the Divine Wisdom, and the Divine principle of Use. The Divine Ends are truly those of the Divine Love; they exist by means of the Divine Wisdom; they are attained and effected in the Uses of a created world.

God as such, namely, in the Divine Ends of His love operating *through* His Wisdom *in* His Divine Uses, is inmostly present in the spiritual world as the world of causes, and through that world in the world of nature as the world of effects. The material world regarded in itself and as material has its three discrete degrees in the trine of sun, atmospheres, and earth, the sun being *as* the end, containing as it does the source of all the forces and materials of the physical world; the atmospheres, considered in their three degrees of aura, ether, and air, are as the means or causes by which the ends or primary endeavours of the sun's elements become active forces; the earth is the ultimate and the effect in which the endeavours of the sun and the forces of the atmospheres become fixed and determined in natural uses. But, strictly speaking, the natural world is of itself wholly dead or without living endeavour or living force, except as these are in it by means of a higher world, or world of mediates, or causes. This world is the spiritual world, which exists also in its own trine of degrees, possessing

## 50 DEGREES OF DIVINE EXISTENCE.

namely its own spiritual sun, its own spiritual heat, light, and atmospheres, even to the degree of *natural*, but not *material* substance ; and these living atmospheres and living forces of the spiritual world, like the living forces of the mind in a man's body, are present, and actuate every least thing of the material world, not only giving it its distinctive form, but impelling it to the performance of its peculiar use in the grand theatre and scale of uses.

Finally, in the living forces, in the atmospheres, the heat and light, and therefore primarily in the sun itself of the spiritual world, all of which being spiritual are actuated by a force *from within*, while the material elements and atmospheres are actuated or impelled by these spiritual forces *from without*, dwell the living endeavours, the Ends themselves of Divine Love, Wisdom, and Use, which again are the degrees of Divine existence itself. Thus, not only in the leasts as in the greatest, but in all the several degrees of creation, we see ever repeated this image of the Creator, in the three degrees which are *as end, cause, and effect*, and in which reside inmostly the essential ends, causes, and effects, in which Deity itself exists.

And now we observe, that so long as we regard the material world as existing alone, or without other being, we cannot truly speak of anything being either its instrumental or its first cause—as being either its cause or its end. It is, as it were, neither caused nor self-causing. As pure matter, it indeed must have its three discrete degrees—prior, posterior, and postreme, which are *as end, cause, and effect*, but which are not truly these. Thus it has its atmospheric forces, which are as its instrumental cause, and in these its solar elements and energies, which are as the ends of its being ; and yet

these, without the inflowing, living forces of the spiritual world, are for ever dead, powerless, and inert.

But to speak of the world thus as only matter is to shut out of view a vast part of that which "really exists." In order to understand *existence*, we must first truly know what exists. Surely matter is not all that exists! The very problem of metaphysics is based on the recognition that something beside matter *does* exist, and the desire to know the relation of this other something to matter. We must take therefore a larger term than matter to embrace "all that exists." Let us then take "substance," or "being," nay God, as the all and the only substance. In this only comprehensive and just view of being, or of "all that exists," each discrete degree of existence at once reveals itself in its proper sphere and relation; at once God is seen to be the End or the First Cause, the spiritual world the instrumental cause, or the cause proper, and the material world the effect. The question no longer embarrasses us, as if blinded with a film of dust before our eyes which should shut out the vision of a heavenly expanse,—how can a substantial world come from, or be related to, pure spirit, or even a Divine essence? For the only substantial world we own to is that which has God as its inmost end or first degree, spirit as its cause or mediate degree, and matter as its effect or lowest degree. All are substance, but each in its own degree, and they are one, as the discrete degrees make and can only make one. Once admit the idea that spirit is substance, not as a continuous degree of matter—thus, as a rarefied gas—but as substance in a degree discrete from matter, thus as dwelling in matter without being of matter, even as the soul dwells in the body without being of the material

elements of the body, and immediately matter takes its true place in the trinal order of existence, as the ultimate, the basis, the aggregate, and the continent in which all the prior degrees close and are at rest, as the effect in which all ends by their causes are actually operating; as the great field of uses in which the Divine Love and Wisdom reach the object of their endeavour.

For the degrees, it should never be forgotten, are homogeneous ; they all take their character from their first. If it is from a material first that we start, we shall have only the three degrees of matter, not of being—not of “all that exists.” But if it is from Substance itself that we start as a first, then we shall have the three degrees of substance or of being itself, and these being essential end, essential cause, and essential effect, the material world can only be assigned to the plane of effect, God to the plane of First Cause or End, and the spiritual world to the plane of the mediate cause. And so we come to the summary statement of the law of creation : “that the Lord produces all things that exist *in* nature *from* Himself, *through* the spiritual world.”—*D. L. W.*, No. 356.

It is only therefore in recognising the discrete degrees in Being that we can see the true relation of matter to substance. To set out with the confirmed notion that matter is all the substance or substantial being there is, and then to inquire what relation does spirit or mind bear to it, is either manifestly absurd, or else it is equivalent to an assertion that spirit and mind are a kind of matter, the position of the materialistic monists. For we cannot establish a relation between a thing that is and a thing that absolutely has no being except the bare relation of mutual negation. We cannot therefore expect to

understand the operation of the mind upon the body, or to investigate the question of the soul's immortality, so long as we set out with the denial that there is any mind or any soul independent of matter. In the same way we cannot expect to understand effects by the study of effects simply, or so long as we regard them as at once cause and effect ; but to truly understand effect we must know causes and explain them from causes. If to understand a thing is to know its relations, then to understand matter we must know its relations to other forms of existence, and especially its relation to spirit or that which actuates and moves it, inasmuch as matter is itself inert. Thus a true knowledge of matter requires that we understand what place it occupies with relation to substance ; and the doctrine of discrete degrees shows us that matter is the lowest and outmost degree of substance, containing within it and above it the higher degrees, which are respectively those of its own cause and its own end.

Of matter we may say, therefore, that it is not substance as that which has any being in and of itself, but that it is the shape which substance assumes in the mental sensations of time and space ; in other words, it is that mode which substance puts on in order to strike our senses and to be a basis of reaction from which the currents of Divine Life descending into creation may commence their re-ascent through man back to their Divine source.

It is here that the lines of pure Metaphysics and of Theology, as the Science of Sciences, cross each other.

For the general purposes of metaphysics this triad division of substance according to discrete degrees into God, the spiritual world, and the material, answering

to End, Cause, and Effect, would be sufficient. That is, we would have here a firm basis on which to proceed in a true classification of all sciences, and in a real advancement in all departments of human knowledge ; we could with this gradation of worlds or spheres of being before us proceed to intelligently see effects from causes, and causes from ends. Starting with a world already existing, and recognising the existence at the same time of a superior world and of a Supreme Being, we would have in these three degrees of being and their actual relations the real subject-matter of *meta-physical* study.

But if we venture a step farther, and inquire into the END itself which lies behind the existence or present form of things ; if we ask why was matter made, or what is the cause of creation itself, then we strike at once into the domain of Theology, the supreme science, the science of Ends, the science of God.

To know that matter exists in a degree discrete from spirit is a metaphysical or philosophical knowledge. To know why and how matter itself came into being, is a knowledge purely theological. To know how matter came into being, is to know the nature of the spiritual world, the world of causes.

To know why matter came into being, is to know the nature of God in whom are the ends, the purposes and reasons of all being.

It is not the purpose of this essay to dwell upon the nature of God, nor to discuss at length the ends of creation, but a word shall be said,—a word which I admit is purely theological, but not the less on that account strictly scientific,—as to the reason why matter was made, and the mode of its creation.

Matter was made as the only means by which the end of creation might be effected.

The End of Creation, the purpose for which the world was made, lies in the highest or first Degree of the Divine Nature, in the Divine Love.

Love by its very nature demands an object. That object must be another than self, else the love of it would be self-love. Love, then, in order to exist, must create another than itself.

This other that Love creates must not only be wholly other than its creative source, must feel itself to be absolutely apart and distinct from it, but it must be able to reciprocate this love, to love in return. For it is only in reciprocation that love is satisfied, that the end of love is attained.

These being the qualities and motives inherent in love by its very nature, it follows that creation must necessarily result, and that the Divine Love is, for no other reason than its own being, the Creator of the world.

To create a world which shall not be the creative Love itself, but the object of it and the reciprocator of it, the Divine Love proceeds by spheres emanating from itself, and yet not itself. These spheres, actuated by the Divine life from within, become the living forces and substances out of which a world is made. As living forces and substances, they constitute the spiritual world or the world of creative instrumental causes. They constitute a complete world in all its discrete trinal order, a world having a supreme central sun or source of vivifying power and substance, and also atmospheres, waters, and earths. To speak of a "world" without these three constituents, sun, atmospheres, and habitable earth, is to deprive the term of

all its meaning. Therefore a spiritual world means a spiritual sun, atmospheres thence proceeding, and an earth or lowest plane of spiritual living substance. But

“Atmospheres, waters, and earths are spoken of as being the general causes by and from which all and everything exists in infinite variety.

“The atmospheres are active powers, the waters are the intermediate powers, and the earths are the passive powers by which all effects exist. These three are such powers in their series solely from the life which proceeds from the Lord as a sun, and causes them to be active.”—*D. L. W.*, No. 178.

And beyond and beneath this instrumental world of “active powers” and by means of them, the proceeding spheres of creative Love produce a world of dead inactive nature, in which the substances and powers, instead of being living or actuated from within, are inert or actuated only from without or from the living forces of the atmospheres of the spiritual world. This world is nature; a world which, from its sun, through its heat, light, atmospheres, and waters, even to its mineral structure, is wholly dead and inert, that is, without life or power of motion from itself.

“Since the sun of the natural world is pure fire, and for that reason dead, therefore the heat proceeding is dead heat, and the light proceeding dead light. By parity of reasoning, the atmospheres, the ether and the air, which receive and communicate the heat and light of that sun, are dead; and being dead, all and everything of the world under them called the earths is dead. Nevertheless, all and each are surrounded by spiritual things which proceed and flow from the sun of the spiritual world; and unless

they were so surrounded, the earths could *not have been actuated and made capable of producing* forms of use, that is vegetables, or forms of life, that is animals ; or of furnishing a supply of material for the existence and subsistence of man.

"Now since nature exists from that (natural) sun, all that exists and subsists therefrom is called natural, it follows that nature with all and everything pertaining to it is dead. The appearance of nature as alive in men and animals is owing to the life which accompanies and actuates nature."

"Since the lowest substances of nature which constitute earths are dead, and *are not mutable* and various according to the state of the affections and thoughts as in the spiritual world, but immutable and fixed, *therefore in nature there are spaces* and distances of spaces. Such things are the consequences of creation closing there, and subsisting in a state of rest. Hence it is evident that spaces are proper to nature. And since spaces in nature are not *appearances of spaces according to states of life* as in the spiritual world, they may also be called dead.

"Since times in like manner are stated and constant, they also are proper to nature ; and as they are not states of life as in the spiritual world, they therefore are dead." (158-161.)

"The difference between the spiritual atmospheres and the natural atmospheres is that the spiritual atmospheres are receptacles of Divine fire and Divine light, consequently of love and wisdom ; for they contain these within them ; whereas the natural atmospheres are not receptacles of Divine fire and Divine light, but of the fire and light of their own sun, which is in itself void of life, and therefore they contain nothing from the sun of the spiritual world,

but still are surrounded by spiritual atmospheres which come from that sun." (175.)

"As the atmospheres decrease in descending, it follows that they become more and more compressed and inert, and at length in the outmost so compressed and inert that they are no more atmospheres but *substances at rest*, and in the natural world fixed, like *those substances on the earth which are called matter*. *These substances retain from the atmospheres whence they originated an effort and endeavour to perform uses.*"

"From this universal origin of all things in the created universe a likeness arises in every one of its parts in that they proceed from firsts to outmosts which are in a state of rest respectively, there to close and subsist. Thus in the human body fibres proceed from their first forms to tendons ; the fibres and these vessels proceed from their first forms till they become cartilages and bones upon which they may rest and subsist. As there is such a progression of the fibres and vessels in a man from first to last, therefore there is a similar progression of the states of those which are sensations, thoughts, and affections ; these must also pass from their first where they are in light to their last where they are in shade ; or from their first where they are in heat to their last where they are not ; and as there is such a progression of these, there is also such a progression of love and all its predicates, and of wisdom and all its predicates ; in a word, of all things of the created universe."

"From the origin of the earth, as thus stated, it appears that in the substances and the matters of which they consist there is *nothing of the Divine in itself*, but that they are deprived of all that is Divine in itself, being as was

said the ends and terminations of the atmospheres whose heat has ended in cold, their light in darkness, their activity in inertness ; but still they have brought with them by continuation from the substance of the spiritual sun that which was there from the Divine, namely, a sphere surrounding the God-Man or the Lord ; from this sphere, by continuation from the sun proceeded by means of the atmospheres the substances and matters of which the earths consist.”

“The origin of earth from the spiritual sun by means of atmospheres can only be so described in words flowing from natural ideas. It could be otherwise described in words flowing from spiritual ideas, since spiritual ideas are without space ; but as such they do not fall into any words of natural language. It is only by correspondences that spiritual thought and speech can communicate with natural thought and speech. But it will suffice if from the above the origin of the earth is perceived in some measure after a natural manner.” (303–306.)

When therefore in the fixed matter of the earth the Creative Love has reached a lowermost basis which is absolutely inert and dead in being wholly void of the Love itself which is its source, there can begin a reaction of the Divine force in the formation of a free voluntary agent who shall reciprocate the Divine Creative Love, and thus being at once loved and loving, the object of Divine Love and the subject of human love, fulfilling the end of creation. For the production and sustenance of such an intelligent and free agent of reciprocated love the natural world was created according to a scale of uses reaching from the lowest mineral up to the highest human and angelic capacities. By these all created things tend to

the formation of an angelic heaven or a perfected and immortal human society in which the Divine Love attains the object of its desire.

“ All things above mentioned, as the sun, the atmospheres, and the earths, are only means to ends ; the ends of creation are the things produced by the Lord as a sun through the atmospheres from the earths, and these ends are called *USES* ; they embrace in their whole extent all things of the vegetable kingdom, all things of the animal kingdom, and at length the human race, and by the human race the angelic heaven. These are called uses because they are recipients of Divine Love and Wisdom, and because they have regard to God their Creator, and thereby conjoin Him to His greatest work, and by this conjunction cause themselves to subsist from Him as they existed.”

“ The uses of all created things ascend by degrees to man, and by man to God the Creator, from whom they originate.”—*D. L. W.*, No. 307.

A doctrine of the gravest importance is here conveyed, and one in which the general doctrine of discrete degrees exhibits its highest worth, namely, the utter and absolute severance of Deity from matter or from man, and thus the closing of the way to pantheism in any of the forms in which it has found abode in all monistic theories hitherto. It will appear from the foregoing statements and citations, that while the three degrees of substance, end, cause, and effect, have their counterparts respectively in God, the spiritual world, and matter, yet that God as the End, or the Being in whom the ends of creation are, is neither the spiritual sun nor the material earths, but is *in* these. And in these, as in all the things of His creating, He resides by virtue of the ultimate of His

own Divine Degrees—Love, Wisdom, and Use. The ends of the universe are not the mere product of matter as the effect of spiritual cause; but matter itself is a means by which the ends of creation are brought about, or in which the Divine degree of use as the embodiment of Divine Love and Wisdom can reside and take effect. We are not therefore to think of matter as the lowest degree of God, but as that which God has made to be absolutely not Himself, in order that by and from it His own principle of use may be actually and constantly exercised in the raising up of beings capable of sharing and reciprocating His love. Therefore, while matter or the mineral kingdom is the lowest degree of natural substance, and is the outmost and lowest *effect* in the trine of being, still the “ends of creation,” which are the uses of creation, are not the matters, the earths themselves, but “the things produced through them.” The Divine uses are indeed the effects of the higher Divine Degrees of Love and Wisdom, which are end and cause, but these uses reside in the ultimates, and so in all the ascending degrees of creation, not as being the things themselves, but as finding in them their forms, embodiments, and means. And thus it is that “all effects or ultimate ends become anew first ends, in a continual series from the Lord the Creator, who is the first, to the conjunction of man with Him, which is the last” (172). It is the end residing in the effect, as end, which makes the effect to live, to thrill with the Divine living and moving principle of use; and yet it is only in the effect, as effect, that is as itself utterly and for ever discrete from cause or source, that the end can thus exert its living force and endeavour. So each degree, while operating one

within and through the other, remains for ever discrete from the other. God the First, the Substance, the All of Self-existent Being, in whom we indeed do “live, and move, and have *our* being,” must be for ever other than the objects He created, and yet must be ever in them as their only life, their only power of endeavouring or of loving, and thus of becoming new ends in the series of universal being. The Divine must become objective to itself by the creation of things not itself, and the life of these created things and their ends, in their series, will all be the result of the Divine Degree of Use, that is, the result of the indwelling in them, as means, of the living and ever-actuating Divine Ends of created things, which live and have being only because they are the means by which creation is for ever being effected.

How Divine Love, from its own substance, not by continuity, but by the proceeding of discrete degrees, can create things not itself as means of its own using, even to dead matter, and as objects of its own delights, as in men and angels, and how these can again, as from subjects wholly free and spontaneous, become lovers in turn of their creative and ever-sustaining source,—mysterious as the problem sounds in words, is simple and manifest when viewed in the light of the doctrine of the three necessary degrees of being. For the moment I admit that I, who exist, require as a cause for my being something not myself, yet without which I am nothing, or never would have been; or, the moment I admit that all the instrumental causes by which existing things are must themselves be the result of some prior end or motive, as no cause exists except there were a motive which it subserves—that moment I have conceived and intelligently

defined that link which alike connects and eternally divides the discrete degrees of being, and which therefore distinguishes the Creator from the created; and in the Creator the degrees of His own being; and in the created universe the degrees of its own existence. The moment I conceive of an "other" to conscious being, which "other" the conscious being can become aware of only as that "other" becomes a part of its own consciousness, that moment I form at least a mental image of a creation or production by discrete degrees. For that mental act, wherein I discern between myself as conscious and some other being as the object of my consciousness, whether it be by affection, or thought, or sensation, at the same time establishes a division of all that exists into at least two existences, present and actual—viz. the conscious being and the "other" of which it is conscious. Carrying this discrimination beyond the limitations of my own being—even to the eternal and infinite—I find that such a division of being, being now possible, may have been always possible; that a contemplation of being, as involving both subject and object, is warranted by reason and experience. If we ask the reason of this first discrimination of being into subject and object, we find it in the nature of Love itself as demanding an object on which to dwell; if we ask the means by which the loving subject can procure an object to itself, we find it is in the creating of substances from itself which shall be not itself; if we ask how can this created object respond to the demands of Creative Love, we find it will be in becoming itself a spontaneous loving subject. Thus the eternal end procures to itself a cause by which it produces the effect in which its ends are reached. That first step

from the consciousness of self to consciousness of an "other" which can be an object of love, is the first step in the process of creation by discrete degrees. Whether that "other" be the very first sphere of spiritual life, substance, and power proceeding from Deity itself, and constituting a spiritual sun, which shall be the great centre and medium of all creative operations; or whether it be the natural sun as the centre and creating medium of a solar universe of the natural world; or whether it be the grain of hard and motionless sand on the sea-shore, these are all equally "not-God," they are all absolutely void of life and power and substance of themselves; and the power of the All-Creating First Substance to produce the utterly dead, inert matter of our earth from itself without its being itself is no more strange or inexplicable than the power to emit from itself a sphere of the highest vital forces and substances, such as constitute the spiritual sun; for one equally with the other of these projections of being in distinct planes is really involved in the primary fact of the division of the totality of being into *the self-conscious*, and *an object of that consciousness* and this division we know from momentary experience now exists, and therefore must have had an original existence in the beginning of creation itself.

If, then, the process of creation consisted in its first step in this production by the Creative Source of something other than itself, the reason, nay, the necessity, of such a self-division of Being lies in the nature of that Creative Source—in, namely, that the inmost being and substance, alike of Deity as it is of created man, is essential Love. This Creative Love, producing an "other" as the object of its delight, can be governed from the first

by only the self-imposed law of removal by discrete and not continuous degrees. It is not by merging and mingling Himself indiscriminately in creation that the Creator could form an object of His love, but by removing by an absolutely impassable gulf the created from the Creator, the finite from the infinite. Therefore “we are to *beware of thinking* that the sun of the spiritual world is God Himself; for that sun is not God, but is the first proceeding of the Divine Love, which is essential spiritual heat, and of the Divine Wisdom, which is essential spiritual light.”

*D. L. W.*, Nos. 93-97.

“As the things which constitute the sun of the spiritual world are from the Lord, and *are not the Lord*, therefore they are not life in itself, but are void of life in itself; just as the things which flow from an angel or a man, and constitute the sphere (of his thoughts or his affections), are *not the angel or the man*, but are from them, void of their life. And these proceeding spheres make one with the angel or the man only in the degree that they accord with them, being derived from the forms of their body, which were the forms of their life in them.”

(294.) Seeing, then, that the first thing of creation, the first proceeding sphere of Divine effluence, which is nothing else than the sphere of the Divine Love and Wisdom flowing forth as creative Heat and Light from a spiritual sun, is absolutely not God, the severance of this created plane of existence from its source in the eternal Being is in nowise different in kind although differing in degree from that separation between God and the lowest mineral. But the purpose of creative love is not attained until it has formed an image of Itself which can act from a consciousness of absolute independence and severance from Deity;

which, while recipient of the only, the Divine Life of love and wisdom in its mental receptacles of will and intellect, may yet act with absolute freedom, and by the exercise of its own rational judgment. Such an image of God to return the love of God freely must be, as it were, a new creative centre and beginning, a new source of power and motion ; his will must burn with the creative fires of love ; his intellect must shine with the informing light of truth. All this must be, and yet he must not be God, for as such he could not be the object of God's love. In him God's love and wisdom must have assumed forms or states in which they are no longer Divine but human. What are these forms by which the spheres of intelligent life and love from God become not God, but objective to God, and the subject in man ?

They are the forms of human thinking and feeling, as distinct from the divine. These distinctive forms of human feeling and thinking are the mental forms of **TIME AND SPACE.**

The conditions necessary to the creation of a free and voluntary loving subject by an Infinite Source of creative love are that there be a world of times and spaces. It is in such a world only that a human life of will and intelligence can begin and develop in a sense of absolute separation, finitude, and independence of Deity. In a natural world, and in the thoughts and feelings of a natural mind, with all the gross delusions of sense and the limitations of matter, must that life begin which can develop an image of God in the form of a man and an angel capable of receiving and reciprocating freely the Love of the Creator.

But that times and spaces may exist we have seen that matter must exist, as that fixed and dead and inert basis

in which the proceeding spheres of creative life rest and terminate. Here these spheres find term and limit. Here they are self-limited. Here is found the dividing line between the lowest degree of conscious and active life, and that which is absolutely unconscious, inert, dead. Until this basis of absolute inertia is reached, there is still lacking that utmost removal of finite from infinite which is necessary in order to form the basis of a new degree of conscious being. In this sensation of the dead and inert and unsubstantial as the veritably real and substantial, and in this conviction that sensuous knowledge is the only knowledge of which the mind is capable, man, like the brute animal, takes his position at the utmost possible remoteness from the Divine Self-consciousness. And from this standpoint he begins his ascent upward to Deity; not to be merged into its infinite abyss by the gradual losing of these perceived limitations, but by becoming, in constantly higher degrees, a form for the reception and exercise of Divine Love in the pursuit of its ultimate end—the creation of a perfect human society, in a heaven of angels. These *human* forms of the Divine uses become in their ascent discretely separated from the merely *animal* forms, by the creation in man of a spiritual mind above the natural mind. By this spiritual nature, between which and the animal or sensual intervenes the rational plane of the mind, man is capable of rising out of the natural limitations of his life, of thinking apart from time and space, and of loving things above the body and its sensual life. The soul of man, therefore, while born and given its basis of human individuality in a body of earth and a mind shaped from notions of time and space, does not die when its material body dies, but continues to live in the

## 68 *END OF CREATION, WHEN ATTAINED.*

spiritual world, preserving from its natural form of thought its finite personality, but capable of living in a world of spiritual substance, and of progressing there indefinitely in the exercise and enjoyment of the Divine gifts of life of which he is the constant recipient.

In the perfect life of a human society in the spiritual world, in which the inflowing Love of God finds free and intelligent exercise in the mutual love and service of man to man, and in their adoring recognition and love of God as its source, the Desire of Creative Love is satisfied, the Ends of Creation are attained.

It is because we think from time and space that we necessarily draw so broad a line of discrimination between the degrees of creation at that point where living substance and force become dead, inert matter. But it is because this is the outmost, the extreme opposite to living, self-moving substance that here creation *terminates and rests*. We think *naturally* of matter as substance ; and it is necessary that we should first think *naturally* in order to become intelligent and voluntary recipients of spiritual thought and life. Did not Creative life terminate in matter, as that which is so manifestly without life as to be known and distinguished from all other existence by the fact that it *is* inanimate and inert, that is, lifeless—then we would in so far have no objective world for our consciousness, and existence would be to us like a dream from which we could never wake, instead of being the world as we know it. But if we would in our metaphysics rise into the plane of causes, we must rise above this plane of natural thinking from time and space, and must think from the plane of spiritual realities. We must think of spiritual things—of thoughts and affections, and, above

all, of the Divine Love and Wisdom, as actual substances. These things exist—they exist as powers; they exist as the powers, the reasons, the causes, without which nothing natural could exist, because matter has no power of creating or moving or forming itself; therefore in these spiritual things we may readily recognise the causative plane of being: their part in the sum total of "all that is" is the part of the mediate degree in the trine of end, cause, and effect. But these spiritual things exist not alone as the reasons and the forming or determining cause of things, but as the substances themselves. Apart from bodily sensation, things have no other substance for us than the substance they have to our thoughts and feelings, or the existence they have to our minds. I do not say *in* our minds as if they had no objective being; for our own thoughts become objects of our thinking and our affection when ultimated in things we say or do or make, or even when contemplated in themselves as pure mental creations. They exist to our minds as substances, not by virtue of the momentary and occasional contact of bodily sense, but by virtue of the substance and form they have in our thought of them and affection from them. Things that we have seen and touched we know substantially, not alone when in contact with our organs of sense, but when entirely removed from sensuous cognition. A thing we have never seen or felt or thought of has therefore no substantial being so far as we are concerned. If there be, indeed, no minutest or remotest particle of matter but what affects us in some indirect way by physical contact, then the whole natural world still exists to us, or has substantial being, only by virtue of its appeal to our consciousness through our sensations. But if, on the

other hand, it be true that there are innumerable material things and vast universes of matter which do not thus exist to our sensuous affection or knowledge, still this fact does not necessarily remove them from the realm of real existence. Yea, even though they exist not to us, still *they exist to Him who knows all*, and who in His Divine Wisdom, from His Divine Love, is everywhere present. *Existing to the Divine mind, they have therefrom, or as forms of Divine consciousness, their existence and all the substantial being they possess.*

Therefore the new metaphysics is as far as possible from asserting the non-existence of matter, or the dependence of matter for its existence on the conscious thought of man. Matter is a Divine absolute fact, and is the substratum on which all our human consciousness is built up; but it derives its whole existence from God as the only real substance, and it exists only as the forms which Divine Love and Wisdom, the Self-conscious, and the Creator of all consciousness and of all forms of sensation, rest. It is that "other than itself" which Self-originating and Self-conscious Being is compelled to create by the laws of existence itself—which the very knowledge we have of the "all that exists," as involving in itself an end, a cause, and an effect, demand as a necessary postulate.

If, however, we seek for substance and form in matter, rather than in the spiritual or mental creation which *it represents to our senses*, we shall surely fail to find either the one or the other there. As for substance, there is nothing discoverable in matter which is not destructible, perishable, evanescent, and changing. Whatever we may mean when we boldly generalize the law that the total volume of matter is invariable, and that matter is

accordingly indestructible, we surely do not mean that there is any known particle of matter which cannot be destroyed or changed into something else. It is, then, only of matter as a whole that we can say it is indestructible. But what is matter "as a whole"? Is it the totality of matter as now existing? But in the twinkling of an eye this vanishes away in the changes that are every instant occurring throughout the whole physical universe. All that remains unchanged, undiminished, unimpaired "as a whole," is not matter but it is substance, that alone from which matter borrows its ever-changing being.

But what is it that changes this abiding substance into the changing forms of matter? Or, in other words, if we do not find substance in matter, shall we not at least find form there? Shape, indeed, we shall find as the spatial dimension which the natural world gives to objects of sensation in the natural mind, but we shall find no form in matter itself as a property. For form is that which determines things into this or that shape, and thus fits them for this or that use. All the forms of use are mental creations, for they are all acts of designing intelligence, being intelligent adaptations of means to ends. Therefore forms as intelligent powers cannot reside in matter itself, but must reside in some spiritual agent to which matter is entirely subject.

We see, then, that matter, while neither substance in itself nor form in itself, is created, that is, has its whole existence, out of that substance and form which is spiritual. Its existence, then, while a most real existence, is real in the degree that, and because the Divine Love and Wisdom as creative Substance and Form make it to be. These make it to be as the effect of what they are the end and

## *72 MATTER A MEANS TO DIVINE END.*

the cause. They make it to be because such is the means they require for accomplishing their own use. For the Divine Will to desire a material world is to give it *substance*, since all substance originates in the Divine Will or Love ; for the Divine Mind to think a material world, from that desire, is to give a material world *form*, since all form originates in the Divine Wisdom ; and for the Divine Love and Wisdom to proceed in creation through created means to the ends of creation, is to give a material world an objective, tangible, visible existence in time and space—to give it shape—to make it, what it is, an outmost plane of lifeless, inert effect from which conscious life may seemingly begin anew and develop with free human rationality, liberty, and love. Matter is the translation of substance into bodily sense of time and space.

The reader will now see how the doctrine of discrete degrees results in the classification of the Science of Being or Universal Knowledge into the three divisions of Theology, Metaphysics, and Physical Science ; Theology being the study of Being from Ends, Metaphysics the study of Being from Causes, and Physical Science being the study of Being in the plane of facts or effects.

The field of metaphysics or philosophy embraces the study of the laws and principles by which the visible world of our experience is formed, and its life governed. Its subjects are the substances and powers of the world of mind or spirit as distinct from the phenomena of matter, but as operating on and affecting these. Carried to its highest reach of vision, metaphysics contemplates the manner by which the total of being resolves itself into the two divisions of conscious subject and perceived object, and so of creative cause and created effect. It

answers the question, How does creation proceed from intelligent and voluntary substance to a phenomenal world? But it does not answer, nor is it in its province to inquire, *Why* creation was ever effected, what was the grand primal necessity that compelled the self-division of being into self-conscious being, and the not-self, into the Lover and the thing loved, the Thinker and the thing thought, the Perceiver and the thing perceived? Why might not the All and the Eternal have remained to eternity satisfied with absolute self-consciousness and self-contemplation, without being ever going forth into existence, and existence into proceeding and work? It is the province of theology only to answer this question, because theology is the science of Ends, of those first causes and first springs of existence which lie behind the laws and the instrumental causes of existing phenomena. And this answer theology finds in the nature of that discrete degree of being which is essential end or motive, namely, in Love as the first creative essence of all things demanding for its object an existing, thus a created world. Theology, therefore, completes the trine of knowledge, of which Metaphysics and Physical Science or the Science of Matter constitute the two lower degrees. As Physics constitutes the language of creation, so does Metaphysics constitute its logic, and Theology its ethics. The discrete degrees alone establish in a way satisfactory to candid reason the boundaries and the relations of these sciences respectively; and if these boundary lines were regarded, many a harsh and worse than useless controversy would be avoided.

Thus it would be seen, that while the theologian is qualified to inquire into the *Why* of creation, and to find

in creative Love at once the substance and the reason of the totality of existence, he is not to deny to the physicist the most real and actual existence of matter, or to wonder, even, that the physicist, as mere physicist, fails to take account of a world existing without the boundaries of time and space. On the other hand, he is to remember that it is on the plane of effects, and only on these, that the ends of creation are really exhibited in the fulness of their power and perfection. The metaphysician, while believing in and investigating the formative power and influence of mind, and thus of a mental and spiritual world upon a material and lifeless one, and so discovering the laws of existence in general, is not to undervalue the splendid antitype or reflection of these laws which the physicist will find operating among the various degrees and forms of material existence. He will remember that correspondence requires two ranges of things to correspond; that both End and Cause reside in the Effect, and that the knowledge of being is far from complete until it embraces the ultimate facts in which both the First Cause and the Instrumental Cause find their complete expression.

Finally, the physicist whose study and business is with effects simply, and who, as a consistent Agnostic, confesses not to know anything above the phenomena of effects, while he contents himself very properly with the sequence of phenomena as constituting all that he knows of "cause and effect," must not deny that to those at least who recognise mind as a distinct entity, an entirely different conception of cause and effect is quite possible; and because he can see no beneficence and no intelligence in those struggles of blind mechanical forces and fortuitously massed atoms which, having no designing cause,

come under his range of vision as mere dead phenomena—that therefore from a higher and wider survey of the total of being there would not appear a purpose and an end harmonizing and determining even these dead elements into the final expression and embodiment of essential Love itself. Because matter expresses not its own Divine cause and Divine end to the physicist, seeing that these cannot be seen from the plane of effects, therefore the physicist is not to deny their existence to the higher degrees of science. But neither let him suppose that, in the absence of his knowledge of these higher degrees of being *in their discrete planes*, therefore he can supply substitutes or equivalents for them on his own; for though he and his followers may spend life after life in the accumulation of well-attested phenomena, and so pile facts upon facts until Ossas lie heaped upon Pelions, still they will never have thereby risen one step above the plane of effect into the discrete plane of cause, nor attained a single perception of what is the end of creation and first reason of the phenomena before them. How sublime, how magnificent, on the contrary, becomes this treasure of physical knowledge, however gained, to him who has attained to true human knowledge, and who can from the standpoint of all three planes of science behold the Divine Ends of creative Love *in* the causative laws of creative Wisdom, and both of these expressed *in* the facts of physical science! While they have their respective boundaries, are after all either of these three great sciences complete when severed from the others, and can a universal knowledge or science of sciences, nay, can a true theology, exist which does not embrace in its survey alike the humblest fact of material nature, gathered in

the patient and toilsome research of the physicist, together with the Love that gave it birth, and the law of spiritual influx and spiritual formation by which it subsists and subserves its humble purpose in the great economy of creation ?

It is the recognition of the end *in* the effect, and not its identification *with* effect, that distinguishes alike a living theology and a living physical science from that which is dead. The accumulation of facts as facts is the material out of which science is to be made, but these do not make science. Science comes alone from the seeing of facts in their relations. If these relations are upon a single continuous plane, they belong all to one degree, and the science resulting is a science of effects—a registry of observations merely. When these related and grouped phenomena are now beheld in their true relations to the higher plane of spiritual laws and spiritual causes, the science from physics becomes metaphysics. The progress is like that from anatomy to the study of psychology. Metaphysics is nothing else than psychology on a universal scale. It is the study of mind in nature, and the classification and interpretation of nature accordingly. Theology contemplates the body of the world and the causative laws and forces which animate it in their *still higher relations* to the plane of a Divine creative will and end. By the agency of the spiritual world, these Divine ends descend into nature, and dwell there in the firm rock of physical fact. But they are there not as buried in a grave, but as the perpetual resurrection of nature out of death to light. For the Divine ends of creation exist in and by means of the effect—matter—without becoming themselves effect; and they exist in

the scale of uses, reaching from the humblest vegetable life to which the striving of even the mineral kingdom has given birth,—up to man and angel and the heavenly society.

While the several planes of science are thus clearly indicated by the doctrine of discrete degrees, and, for the purpose of illustration, have been described as if pursued by each its own votaries, it would be as erroneous as it is unnecessary to conclude that these votaries may not all be embraced in one person. Indeed, the ideal aim of science can only be attained when the physicist is both metaphysician and theologian, in so far as that he studies facts in the light of spiritual laws, and spiritual laws in that of Divine Ends. In this way only can the Image of God be found out and revealed in nature, and the profound truth recognised that the “Divine and Infinite are the same in the least and in the greatest.”

It was from a principle of the intellect that Descartes developed his proof of God and his system of knowledge : he starts with the *cogito*, I think.

Likewise Hegel, in his development of being into the existing world, proceeds according to the intellectual law of thought—the logical syllogism.

It is alone in the new metaphysics, as set forth in the *Divine Love and Wisdom*, that the world is developed from the *necessity of Love*, as the first essence and substance, demanding an object to itself. The preceding philosophies, dealing as they do with the intellectual means rather than the voluntary end of the world’s development, thus truly seem to lead up through the science of cause to the science of the End—theology. But as the step from Physics to Metaphysics is a discrete

degree in science, demanding a new recognition in the mind, that of the existence of spirit and of the influence of spirit on matter, so did the step from philosophy to theology demand the still further recognition of the existence of God and of a Divine influence upon spirit and nature alike. The God thus recognised must be no mere totality of physical or mechanical force, for this physics was competent to behold in its own sphere. Nor is it mere spirit as a general informing and intellectual force—a kind of *voûs* pervading all things, or reason in all things—for this metaphysics has already taken note of; but God as a being of will *and* intelligence, of love *and* wisdom, as well as the source of all natural substance and force, since it is only in will that ends, as controlling desires and motives, can abide. But as will is inseparable from person, a person being naught else but a united will and intellect, therefore God is a person—the Divine Person—the God-Man.

The true knowledge of ends, and thus the universal knowledge, is attainable only as all effects are seen from their causes, and all causes from their ends. Such knowledge is attainable by no man, not only by reason of the limited range of phenomena coming within the vision of any single mind, but also because the end being the inmost degree of anything, and being that Divine which is alike in the least and the greatest, can be known truly only to the Infinite. Since, then, the Infinite mind alone can know the ends of all things from its own Divine wisdom, it alone can provide this knowledge of ends for finite minds according to their ability or willingness to receive this knowledge. The knowledge thus provided is Revelation. Revealed truth is that inmost Divine Truth

which, under the clothing of a literal symbolic Word or Scripture, was conveyed by inward dictate to human writers, as the same truth, enveloped in sensuous appearances, is presented on the plane of effects in nature in the visible universe. While the particulars involved in the Divine ends are infinite, yet the general things which are revealed are such as involve infinite things in each, and these infinite things are gradually opened to the perception of the mind which has received the general truths of Divine Revelation.

In what manner the particular ends of Divine creative love can be discerned, when once the general end is perceived, may be seen from the experience of every student of nature who sets out with the acknowledgment of these great truths of revelation:—that there is a Divine Creator of the world; that man is created in His image; that all things are made to be subservient to man, and in order that man may be united with God, and so the uses of nature be constantly aspiring and returning to their Divine source. The innumerable particulars of human science will to such a mind be a constant and unlimited revelation of Divine ends. If not upon the highest, yet he stands upon a high plane, from which he is enabled to view effects from their causes, and causes from their ends.

In conclusion, I desire to place before the reader's eye a brief *r  sum  * of the doctrine of Discrete Degrees as applied to the subject of Creation and the ascending scale of uses. For as, in Creation, the Divine proceeds in descending degrees to the lowest basis or termination of life in the mineral kingdom of nature, so in the Scale of Uses does the Created Universe return again by ascending

degrees, through man, to God, its source. Any representation of this to the eye must be crude and imperfect—a mere rough outline. Such may, however, by spatial arrangement suggest to the mind a series of principles which, nevertheless, are to be considered as spiritual essences and forms, and apart from the limitations of space and time. If we keep constantly in mind the relation of the successive to the simultaneous order of discrete degrees, namely, that the highest in successive order is the inmost in simultaneous order, we shall be less liable to be misled by any spatial representation of the successive degrees in creation. To think of God as highest above nature ought in true science to be equivalent to thinking of Him as inmost in nature; equally to think of Him as before all time ought to be equivalent to thinking of Him as *in* all time; thus the true science will contemplate God as a Being in all space yet not of space, and in all time yet not of time. Infinity will not be regarded as an infinity of space or size, nor will Eternity be regarded as an eternity of times, but infinity and eternity will be seen to be the two necessary and only attributes of pure *Esse*, or being *per se*, apart from existence or a created world; and space and time will be regarded as those modes of finite human consciousness of things, created by the Divine Proceeding, by means of a fixed basis of sensation in matter. God, as the Creator, is not to be thought of as remote from the world either in space or in time; rather, He is scientifically to be thought of as inmost in all present existing being, as the life, the substance, the end of all; and so is Creation to be thought of as a process continually going on, and the subsistence of the world as its perpetual existence or coming forth from the Divine.

Another truth to be carefully borne in mind when contemplating the process of creation by Discrete Degrees, is that not only do all existing things possess degrees of both kinds, continuous and discrete, but that each discrete degree is in itself capable of variation by continuous degrees. Particularly is this to be remembered when considering the statement in *Divine Love and Wisdom*:

“In either world, the spiritual and the natural, there are three atmospheres, distinct from each other according to degrees of altitude (discrete degree), and in their downward progression they decrease according to degrees of latitude (continuous degrees). And because the atmospheres decrease in their progression downward, it follows that they continually become more compressed and inert; and finally in the lowest things so compressed and inert that they are no longer atmospheres but substances at rest, and in the natural world fixed like those in the earth which are called matter.” (302.)

“That substances and matters such as are in the earth have been produced from the sun through its atmospheres, who does not affirm that considers well that there are perpetual mediations from the first to last? and that nothing can come into existence but from something prior to itself, and finally from a first? The first is the sun of the spiritual world, and the First of that sun is God-Man or the Lord.

“Now as the atmospheres are the prior things through which that sun presents itself in the outmost, and as those prior things continually decrease in activity and expansion down to the lasts, it follows that when their activity and expansion cease in the last things, they become substances and matters such as are in the earth,—

which retain in them from the atmospheres whence they originate an incitement and endeavour to bring forth uses." (303.)

The first impression derived from these passages is likely to be that the discrete degrees are here merged into continuous degrees, and that the earth is only the aura or highest and rarest atmosphere in a state of dense compression and inertia. This, however, is not the case; while each atmosphere does increase in density in its descent, and while the lowest atmosphere becomes so dense and inert as to come to a state of rest and inertia, still the degree dividing one atmosphere from another and the lowest from the earth remains a discrete one; it is not the confused blending of one into another of continuous degrees. Thus water, although produced from the atmospheric air, is not condensed air; it has qualities which distinguish it unmistakeably from the air; and equally is the mineral wholly different from the water although produced from it. The atmospheric air is divided from the ether by a discrete degree, but the atmospheric air is also in itself, as we have seen elsewhere, subdivided into its three forces, its active, mediate, and passive forces, consisting of air, water, and earth.

Thus while in each world, viewed as a whole, there is a descent from the rare to the dense by continuous degrees, yet in the descent the succession and relation of discrete degrees is everywhere preserved in their trinal order, and in every instance the dividing lines will be found to be discernible between the three planes of a substance related to one another, as end, cause, and effect. It is thus only that the discrete degrees will be found to be degrees of production or of causation and so of quality,

while the continuous degrees are degrees of comparison, of extension, and of quantity.

"The knowledge of degrees is as it were the key to open the causes of things and enter into them ; without it scarcely anything of cause can be known ; for without it the objects and subjects of both worlds appear so equivalent (*univoca*) as to seem to have nothing in them but what is seen by the eye, when nevertheless this, as compared with the things which lie interiorly concealed, is as one to thousands, yea to myriads. The interior things which lie hid can by no means be discovered unless degrees be understood ; *for exterior things advance to interior things, and these to inmost by degrees not continuous but discrete.* Deccrements and decreasings from grosser to finer or from denser to rarer, or rather increments and increasings from finer to grosser or from rarer to denser, like that of light to shade or of heat to cold, are called continuous degrees. But discrete degrees are entirely different ; they are in the relation of prior, posterior, and postreme, or of end, cause, and effect. They are called discrete degrees because the prior is by itself, the posterior by itself, and the postreme by itself ; but still, taken together, they make a one."

"The atmospheres, which are called ether and air from highest to lowest or from the sun to the earth, are discriminated into such degrees, and are, as simples, the congregates of these simples, and again the congregates of these congregates which taken together are called a composite. These last degrees are discrete because they exist distinctly and are understood by degrees of altitude, but the former degrees are continuous because they continually increase, and they are understood by degrees of latitude."

“Without a knowledge of these degrees nothing can be known of the difference between spiritual and natural and therefore of correspondence—yea, of any difference between men and beasts or of the difference *between the more perfect and the more imperfect beasts*; or of the difference between the forms of the vegetable kingdom and between the materials which compose the mineral kingdom. Whence it may appear that those who are ignorant of these degrees cannot from any judgment *see causes*. They only see effects and judge of causes from them, which is done for the most part by an induction continuous with effects; when nevertheless *causes do not produce effects by continuity but discretely*; for a cause is one thing and an effect another; there is a difference as between prior and posterior, *or as between a thing forming and the thing formed*.”—*D. L. W.*, Nos. 184, 185.

With the foregoing very general and imperfect sketch of the doctrine of Discrete Degrees in mind, we are now prepared to appreciate in some degree how far the new metaphysics has solved the old questions of the unity or the duality of existence. We can behold how the unity of all being is preserved without the possibility of pantheism, how the immanence of God in nature and in man in nowise derogates from His absolute Deity nor destroys the finiteness and objective reality of sensuous phenomena. The contemplation of being thrust upon us by our very consciousness as embracing subject and object requires for its explanation an original process from Being *per se* into existence, and thence into the creation of a world. The very infinity of God demands the finitude of man as the not-Divine to be the object of Divine Love, and this finitude of man can only be realized by a proceeding

or going forth of the infinite from itself into the extreme opposites of itself,—into a world that is dead, inert, and fixed. We have seen that the steps of this proceeding of Deity into creation are the steps or degrees of production and causation which are exhibited in the existence of everything that is; that these steps are the discrete degrees of end, cause, and effect, the one being necessary to the others, each, while distinct in itself, involving or demanding the others as absolutely necessary to its own existence, and the three in this manner making a perfect one. So the world, the “All that is,” stands before us a constant living reality, a substance whose outer shape appeals to our physical senses as matter, while its interior form and essence are spiritual and divine, an exhaustless activity, a perpetual going forth of a Divine Love to the achievements of its own ends in a world which it creates and in a human society which it may perfect and bless to all eternity.

We have attempted to represent in a diagram<sup>1</sup> the following steps in the creation of the world by discrete degrees in the descending order, and the return of creation to union with the Creator by the scale of uses in ascending order.

Of the all-originating Being, the Divine Esse itself, nothing can be predicated but infinity and eternity. For Being pure and simple must always have been, nor can it cease to be, nor can there be a limit to it, and yet until it *exists* it has not become a thing to which we can assign qualities or a name.

But the Divine Being not only is, but exists; it exists in having relation to that which is, or is to be, outside of

<sup>1</sup> Page 92.

itself. Its existence is in the three Divine Essentials of Love, Wisdom, and Use. These are the qualities or principles by which alone any created things may have being.

But besides the Divine Being and the Divine Existence, there is also the actual going forth or Proceeding of the Divine, or the Divine in its going forth. What goes forth is the Divine Love and the Divine Wisdom and the Divine of Use, and in these essentials pure Being exists. It is because Being *exists* in Love, Wisdom, and Use, that it can proceed in the works of creation. Therefore of this trine of Divine *ESSE*, *EXISTERE*, and *PROCEDERE*, the *ESSE* is the Infinite and Eternal End, the *EXISTERE* is the Infinite and Eternal Cause, and the *PROCEDERE* is the Infinite and Eternal Effect: and each of these again contains within itself its corresponding degree of the Divine Essentials, the *ESSE* being essentially the Divine Love, the *EXISTERE* being essentially the Divine Wisdom, Logos or Word, the *PROCEDERE* being essentially the Divine Principle of Use or Work.

The First Proceeding of the Divine Love and Wisdom constitutes the luminous sphere which is the sun of the spiritual world, and is the source of spiritual heat and spiritual light. "That heat and light are called spiritual because God is called a spirit, and *God as a spirit is that Proceeding.*" (100.) And the world, which derives its whole being from this sun as the source of spiritual heat and light, is hence called the spiritual world.

The Divine Principle of Use is presented in the spiritual world as the atmospheres proceeding from the spiritual sun, embodying and conveying its heat and its light, and constituting the successive heavens or expanses of the spiritual world.

"Those spiritual auras and atmospheres which are nearest to the Lord as a sun are the purest; but further away they are by degrees less and less pure. Hence it is that there are three heavens; the inmost heaven in the purer aura, the middle heaven in an aura less pure, the lowest heaven in an aura still less pure. These auras or atmospheres, which are spiritual because they have sprung forth from the Lord as a sun, *when acted upon generally present heat, and when modified molecularly present light.*"—*Apocalypse Explained*, No. 944.

From the spiritual sun itself its atmospheres proceed respectively, and in their corresponding series, the natural sun and its three atmospheres, the lowest of these embracing its three discrete degrees of air, water, and earth.

In the mineral kingdom of the earth is found the extreme limit to the outgoing Divine life and force. Here it terminates, and rests in fixed, dead, inert matter. From this there is reaction, the sense of space and time, and the possibility of thought from these, and thus a return of all nature through man to the Creator, by the ascending scale of uses. For these uses in which the ends of creation are achieved, the mineral kingdom supplies the materials, and is actuated by an endeavour to furnish forms of use, from which endeavour come the nourishing properties of the soil. The vegetable kingdom furnishes the *forms* of use, the animal kingdom and man the *affections* and the life of use.

The animal kingdom, ascending through its degrees of less and more perfect animals, in man reaches again the boundary of the spiritual world, in the natural degree of the human mind, above which lie the spiritual degrees. These are opened in succession in the minds of men after

death, now angels, in the spiritual world. According to the varying qualities of the ruling love, the several societies of angelic spirits are ranged in successive heavens. The highest of these is the celestial sphere, characterized by the highest human love—the love to the Lord. These dwell more immediately in the effulgent brightness and warmth of the spiritual sun, and in the love of these purified, beatified, and exalted souls, the yearning of nature for a return to and a union with its Divine Creator is satisfied, and the ends of creation are accomplished. It is to God, not as formless and aimless Being, but as Person, that creation can be ascribed; and the fact that creation exists is proof that pure Being itself exists in a Divine Person of Love, Wisdom, and Use, called in these pages the God-Man and the Lord. As it is through the Lord as the creative Word that all things were made, so it is in the Word incarnate that the Divine goes out to the extremities of His creation, and it is in the risen and glorified Word that all creation returns to and finds conjunction with its Divine Source. Therefore the Lord as the WORD is represented as the first of the descending series, and in the Divine Humanity as the last of the ascending series, not as denying to Him supreme and sole Divinity, but because through Him and in Him the absolute, eternal, and infinite Being assumes relations with the world as its Creator, Saviour, and Regenerator.

But in closing, let the summary of the whole doctrine in its own majestic proportion, and as applied to the vastest and noblest conceptions of which human thought is capable, be given in the language of him to whom, under God, the world is indebted for this new system of metaphysics, which holds by either hand theology and

physical science in friendly embrace, and opens the way to a truly universal and living science, of which the knowledge of earth shall be the body, and the knowledge of God the soul.

“There are three things in every created thing, as well in the greatest as in the least, namely, end, cause, and effect. There is no created thing in which these do not exist.

“In the greatest, or the universe, these three exist in the following order :—

“The *end* of all things is in the sun, which is the proximate proceeding of the Divine love and Divine wisdom ;

“The *causes* of all things are in the spiritual world ; and

“The *effects* of all things are in the natural world.

“It follows that the universe and everything in it was created from the Lord by the sun, which has in it the end of all things.

“Creation cannot be explained so as to be apprehended unless space and time be removed from the thought.

“Remove space and time if you can, or as much as you can, and, keeping the mind in an idea abstracted from space and time, you will perceive that the greatest of space and the least of space do not differ at all. The idea of the creation of the universe, as a whole, cannot then be any other than that of the creation of any particular part of it ; and the diversity of created things will be seen to result from the infinite things which are in the God-Man, and the indefinitely many things in the sun which is the proximate proceeding from Him ; and these indefinite things will be found to be imaged in all the created universe.

"The creation of the universe, and of all things in it, cannot be said to have been effected from space to space, nor from time to time, progressively and successively, but from eternity and infinity; not eternity of time, for this has no existence, but from eternity not of time, since this is identical with the Divine; nor from infinity of space, for this also has no existence, but from infinity not of space, which also is identical with the Divine."<sup>1</sup>

—*D. L. W.*, Nos. 154—156.

"These three—end, cause, and effect—exist in the created universe, both in its greatest and in its least parts, because they exist in God the Creator, who is the Lord from eternity; but since He is infinite, and infinite things in the Infinite are distinctly one [*distincte unum*], therefore these three in Him and in His infinites are distinctly one. Hence it is that the universe which was created from His being, and which, *regarded as to uses*, is His image, obtained these three in all and everything belonging to it."

"The universal End, which is the end of all things in creation, is that there may be an eternal conjunction of the Creator with the created universe; and this is impossible unless there be subjects in which His Divine may be as in Himself, consequently in which it may dwell

<sup>1</sup> "These things, I know, transcend the ideas of thought which are in natural light, but do not transcend the ideas of thoughts in spiritual light, for in these there is nothing of space and time; nor do they altogether transcend the ideas which are in nature, for when it is said there is no such thing as infinite space, every one assents to it from reason; it is the same with eternity, this being the infinite of time. The expression, 'to eternity,' is comprehended from time; but from eternity is not comprehended unless time be removed."—*D. L. W.*, No. 156.

*THE END OF CREATION ATTAINED.* 91

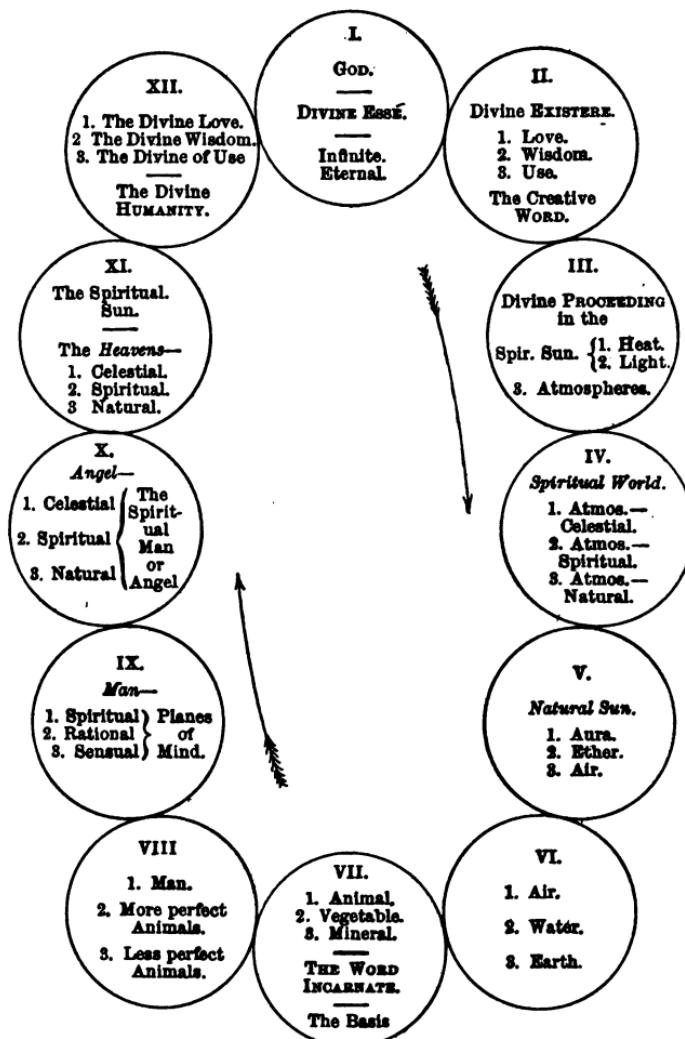
and remain ; which subjects, in order that they may be His habitations and mansions, must be recipients of His love and wisdom *as from themselves* ; consequently they must be such as to elevate themselves to the Creator as from themselves and join themselves with Him ; without this reciprocation no conjunction can be effected.”

“These subjects are men, who can elevate and join themselves [to God] as from themselves. By this conjunction the Lord is present in every work created from Himself ; for every created thing is finally for the sake of man.”

“Wherefore the uses of all things which are created ascend by degrees from lowest things to man, and through man to God, their Creator, from whom they originate.”

—*D. L. W.*, Nos. 169, 170.

A REPRESENTATION OF CREATION BY DISCRETE DEGREES IN  
THEIR DESCENDING AND ASCENDING ORDER.



**THE WORD:  
IN CREATION, IN REDEMPTION, AND  
IN HUMANITY.**



## THE WORD : IN CREATION, IN REDEMPTION, AND IN HUMANITY.

THE doctrine of the Word is, and has always been, the essential doctrine of all religion, pagan, Jewish, or Christian. Barbaric or civilized, idolatrous, mystic, contemplative, or practical, every religion, as such, rests upon its conception of the WORD, or of *God speaking Himself forth*, revealing Himself in some intelligible form to men. In the higher thoughts of men this doctrine becomes an element in philosophy and metaphysics of the very first importance.

### THE WORD IN GREEK PHILOSOPHY.

The Word, as creative, is set forth in Plato's philosophy,<sup>1</sup> as the Idea, or Pattern, according to which the world was created, or by means of which shapeless matter, or chaos, acquired form or distinct existence; so that the visible world arose solely by its "mingling of the Idea" with the primitive substance out of which all things were made.

In Aristotle the creative Word appears as the *Reason*,<sup>2</sup> which gives actual and definite being to that which was otherwise only potential and unformed.

<sup>1</sup> See especially the *Timæus*.

<sup>2</sup> The *νοῦς τομεῖκός*. See Aristotle, *De Anima*, iii.  
95

In the Stoics we find the same great doctrine in the *World-Reason*, or creative fire which contains the rational germs<sup>1</sup> of all things, and pervades the world as the enlivening breath of Deity.

In Philo of Alexandria, the great Jewish philosopher, who flourished at the time of Christ, the Logos, or WORD, is a being intermediate between God and the world, dwelling with God as His Wisdom, through whose agency God created the world and has revealed Himself to it. With Philo the Word (Logos) is the highest of the Divine forces: "The world of ideas has its place in the Divine Logos as the plan of a city is in the mind of the master builder." (*De Mundi Opificio*, i. 4.) In God, he says, dwell reason, thought, and its expression. This reason is God's Wisdom. The creation of the world he attributes to God's love, but it was through the instrumentality of the Logos, or the Word. In this philosopher the *Ideas* of Plato seem to be transformed into Divine thoughts, having their seat in the *Logos*, or Word.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, in the new Platonic philosophy, Plotinus set forth the mind, or the Ideas, as the first emanation from the One, or the Good, and as containing the formative forces, or Words, *logoi* (*λόγοι*), by which mere shapeless being is reduced to form and order.<sup>3</sup>

We see, therefore, how the highest gleams of ancient philosophy seem but the radiations of the Divine truth declared in the sublime words of John's Gospel—"In the beginning was the Word: all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made."

<sup>1</sup> λόγος σπερματικός.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* i. 241.

<sup>2</sup> Ueberweg, *Hist. Phil.* i. p. 231.

What then must be the deep and awful significance of those other words which follow :—

“And the Word was with God, and was God.

“In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.

“**AND THE WORD WAS MADE FLESH AND DWELT AMONG US, AND WE BEHELD HIS GLORY—THE GLORY AS OF THE ONLY BEGOTTEN OF THE FATHER, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH.**”

I. The Word in the beginning, or in Creation.

II. The Word in Revelation : *first*, as “made flesh,” or in the work of Redemption ; and *second*, as the Presence of God with man, or as the perpetual Revelation of the Glory of the Father of mankind.

Let these three topics engage our attention at this time.

#### I. THE WORD IN CREATION.

As said above, the Word in Creation is not a dogmatic, any more than it is a scientific or philosophic assumption. It is simply a fundamental fact.—In the beginning was the Word, for the reason that without a Word, yea, a Divine Word, there would have been no beginning. *The beginning of things is their being defined.* This means that they are shaped into “this” and “that ;” in other words, that they are “made.” But this distinction into “this” and “that” is an act of mind : the idea must exist before the thing, and before the world became a world of distinct form, order and beauty, there was the idea, the *logos*, or logic of it in the mind of the Creator. Indeed, it is only by virtue of the Divine Wisdom that the Divine Love *can* create or make a world for its

loving. This Divine Wisdom is the Creative Word which first proceeds from the primal being of Deity, the Divine Love; it is the existence (*existere*) of the being (*esse*) of God. By this primal wisdom all ideas and the whole reason of the world came into being as the forms of the Divine Love. They are thus the origin of things, in being the first idea of things, the first mental distinction of *this* from *that*; the first to fix the relation of *this* to *that*. For God to love or desire a world was to give that world substance, or being; for God to think that world which He desired was to give it form. The Word is the spoken thought. The beginning of the world was the spoken thought of God. This is the "Let there be light!" at which a visible and beautiful world springs into being out of chaos and darkness. While things are in darkness, it is as if they were not. It is as the light appears that they take shape, and have a definite, cognizable existence. The mass of clay before the artist is as chaos; the idea broods over it, and breathes itself into it, like the Spirit of the Creator over the face of the deep. The Word, the forming idea, goes from the artist into the clay, moulding that into form which had no form, and making each part to be a related part, or part of a whole; thus distinguished from, at the same time that it is united to, other parts.<sup>1</sup> In this way a new thing is created which, without this living Word, had never been; and so the statue stands forth complete—a form of beauty, of harmony, of "parts" and "relations"—things purely ideal; and so expressing the mind and the dream of the artist. So did the creative Word of God give to each thing in nature its distinctive being.

<sup>1</sup> Compare Swedenborg, *Divine Love and Wisdom*, No. 367.

“Without Him was not anything made that was made.” It is the Divine Wisdom going forth from the Divine Love that put form, and thus a *meaning* into nature, and made it in any sense a book. It is not uncommon for scientists to speak of the “meaning” of nature. But surely there can be no meaning in nature but that which was put there. Nature, as unintelligent force, could not have blindly shaped itself to have a “meaning,” and then the meaning have come in, or rather come out, as an after-thought or accident. But meaning is a thing of mind, and a “meaning in nature” is nothing else than “mind in nature,” *i.e.* the Word as Creator. For a book is only what has words, and nature is a book only as it contains the Words, the expressed ideas, of its Maker. To the eye of the brute, a book is not a book of words; it is a lump of matter. So to the naturalist, who sees in nature no wisdom or intelligence written in words—to such a mind nature is no book; it is sheer bulk. To him, nature is as yet truly without form, and void: it has not yet been touched by the creative Word.

As said above, for God to love is for Him to give substance to things; for Him to think is to give them form and definite existence. For thought is the form of His own substance, since love exists by wisdom. The thinking out of God’s love is His wisdom, and these thoughts shown forth in language or in things are the Word.

All the life we have is a part of this going forth of the Divine Love *into* the creature *by means of* Wisdom, or the Word. This is the source of all mental as well as of all physical life. Equally with the world without, was and is the world within created by the Word of God.

The Wisdom of God is His Word giving form and taking form in human minds. We could never think, had not God thought before us, any more than we could live without God having lived before us. The Word of God not only made all nature, or all objects, to be what they are, but is equally what enables us to have ideas of these things—to know one from another—to know differences and relations among things or the parts of a thing. There would therefore be no things in the mind any more than in nature, except by the created Word. Of our every mental consciousness, perception, judgment, conclusion, knowledge, and faith, it is absolutely and essentially true that all of these things were made by Him, the Word, and without Him was not anything made that was made. This is why the human mind is a world while the brute mind is not.

A dumb brute looking at the printed page of the Bible would see no *things* there. The things that are there to the rational sight of man are to the brute as if they were not. They are as yet not made, because the Wisdom is not yet there to make them.

Thus things in the mind—or what is the same, the mind's perception of things in or out of itself—have their being from the Word, or from the primal reason and the rational power imparted from it to man. Within and without, all things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.

The Word of God as the truth of God, is that Light which in its appearing calls forth a world into being. It is, therefore, the true Light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. The light of the sun of our universe is but the *physical* side of the creative,

formative Truth of the Creator. This Truth makes worlds physical, moral, spiritual. It is of the Word that it is said, "Behold, I create new heavens and a new earth." It is of the Word that Swedenborg says: A Church is a Church, or has its distinct being and form as a Church, "according to its understanding of the Word;"<sup>1</sup> and the inauguration of every new growth, new age, new movement in the life of man, political, moral, and spiritual, is in the dawn of new truth, with its world-forming power. It is true now and always—"In the beginning is the Word."

When the sun rises, and its sweet, cheery light steals silently over the earth, what a creation does it call into being!

"A new-created world springs up at its command."

"Let there be light," means let there be to the human mind a visible world; and at the silent bidding of God's messenger, mountains lift their heads; the oceans and broad lakes unveil their bosoms; the forests show their plumy heads; the clouds roll forth in splendour; the very air is tremulous with glory. It is the Word that begins! It is the making of things! It is the creative power of light!

## II. THE WORD IN REVELATION.

From the Word in Creation to the Word in Revelation the transition is from the mind of God to the mind of man. It is to man alone that God reveals Himself, and this is because the creative Word has already formed in man, and in him alone, a heaven and an earth in which

<sup>1</sup> *True Christian Religion*, Nos. 243-247.

the light of Divine Truth may shine, and where it may produce its forms of order, and beauty, and use.

The purpose of revelation is the salvation of the world, with all that this implies. It is, therefore, a new genesis, or a creating of a new world out of a moral chaos. It is redemption, and to this end, the Word made flesh, suffering, triumphing, and ascending in glory. It is the coming of the Lord to judgment. It is the City of God. It is the permanent presence and indwelling of God with men. In a word, the Creator of the world is its Saviour! and becomes so by revelation. **THE FATHER OF MAN REVEALS HIMSELF TO HIS CHILD.** God as unknown and inconceivable is not the heavenly Father. No rational conception of God can admit that He created intelligent souls only for ever to evade their knowledge, to hide Himself from their recognition and their love. The father reveals himself to his child. God the Father of all reveals Himself to His immortal creatures in His Word, which is His Wisdom. By means of His Word made flesh He, as the Divine Truth, clothes Himself with human nature, and Himself comes down to the low estate of us men, to redeem and save us. The Father of men, in His revealings of Himself to man, is Life, the life of the Father's love, and that life is thus become the "Light of men." The Creator of the world thus becomes its Preserver, its Saviour. The salvation He procures by means of His Word is the restoration of human souls to the laws of His own Divine Order—the laws of a blessed, an eternal, heavenly life. This is the full, round plan of God's Providence as the end of creation. To create a world is not enough to answer the ends of an infinite love, if creation is not followed

by salvation. The end of the creation of the world is that a heaven of angels, who have first been men on earth, may enjoy to eternity the gifts of the heavenly Father's love, and reciprocate this love in love and service to one another. This end or purpose would have been realized in the first creation, the first genesis, had not mankind, by the abuse of free will and rationality, become the father of evil, and thence of the disease and disorder, the misery and strife that come from breaking the laws of a perfect Creator. To restore human life to order, to make it possible for man freely to return to the life of heaven and to become that immortal angel of light, and beauty, and power that God first designed him—for this, *Redemption* was necessary, and for this the Lord became man. The Divine becomes now the Sender *and* the Sent. The Love is what sends; the Truth, or Word, is what is sent.<sup>1</sup> The Divine becomes now the Father *and* the Son. The Father is the Love that sends; the Son is the Truth, the Word, that is sent. Truth is the messenger of the gospel, but its message is Love. The Truth, the Word, of God is made flesh, and we behold His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, the glory of the Divine Wisdom begotten of the Divine Love—full of grace and truth.

#### THE WORD IN REDEMPTION.

To redeem man, the Truth, the Word, made itself man. Not only so did it bear to our vision the glory of a Divine Wisdom when all true wisdom had vanished from

<sup>1</sup> "That the world may know that Thou hast sent me, and hast loved them" (St. John xvii. 28).

the belief of men, but it lay the sharp edge of pure, undeviating, fearless truth at the root of the evils of the world ; it let the tinselled wickednesses of men appear in all their depravity and deadly power, and it strengthened mankind with the power of a new aim, a new ambition, a new hope, and a new faith. The redeeming power of the Word was first put forth in the combat which the Lord sustained in the flesh with all the hells, a combat for the liberation of human souls from the infestation and obsession of devils. He drove out devils. He first resisted the devil in His own person, and so obtained power to subdue all the hells and to command devils to come out of men, and to bid men henceforth be of good cheer, because He has overcome the world. The ability of man, from freedom, to choose the right and to do it, this is what the Word won in its conflict with hell. It was the power of truth that destroyed the sway of falsity and evil, because it not only opposed itself as a law of conduct to the unrighteous and corrupting ways of the world, but in the new law of living which it gave to men there was the virtue of a Divine power. The Word was the channel of truth and grace from the Father. In this Word incarnate, suffering under the woes of humanity, beating down our foes, carrying the cross before us, raised upon it, and by His very death drawing men to Him,—in this Word the human race found its new genesis. Again, in “the beginning God made a heaven and an earth;” and in this beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and was God. The power that made over the world in the inauguration of Christianity ; that threw down the pagan temples of Rome and of Greece, and quenched their altar fires ; that made to cease the gladiatorial fights in the

arena; that called the savages of Scythia, the Hun, the Goth, and the Briton to cease to live for war and plunder, and to beat their spears into pruning-hooks,—this was the silent, irresistible, creative power of truth. It was the Word in the beginning of a new epoch of human existence and development.

In all the realms of life it is the same: in science, in politics, in social reform—the new truth is what makes over the world. The Word is thus not only the former but the re-former of man, and thus is the great mediator between Creation and Salvation. Where the moral nature of man has fallen into darkness, the light shining in his intellectual nature is given as a lantern to lead him out. And this shining light is the Word. Through the planes of the intellect,<sup>1</sup> as through crystal doors, shines down the light from the world above matter, above nature, from the world of pure spiritual substance, where light itself is truth, and where truth is the form of love. It is in this light alone that man sees true light, that he may know the truth as it is in God. Knowing this, he may accept it, be guided, yea, be ruled by it, be defended by it, and be saved by it. By keeping its commandments, and only by doing so, he may enter into life. Unless God should thus by His Word enter into man, by revealing Himself first to the intellect and then to the will, man would never be reformed, regenerated. There would remain in him only the first genesis—the beginning in which he obtained his being only as an animal and a part of nature. His own mental nature is left to chaos and darkness, such as the world was before the Word was spoken, “Let there be light.” The Creator of

<sup>1</sup> *Divine Love and Wisdom*, Nos. 242, 406.

the world, in order to become the Re-creator and Saviour of His world, now speaks the Word and becomes the Revelator of Himself to that subject which alone can receive what He gives.

That which reveals is the Word; but the Word is heard, *can* be heard, alone by man. The Divine end in creation, therefore, includes not only God's speaking the Word, but man's hearing. Except for this, the Love which is the Father of all things waits in an eternal silence for that response which alone it desires, and for which it has made all and given all. My words and your words speak our minds one to another. The Word of God speaks the Divine nature and the Divine mind to man.

The relation of revelation to creation is that, therefore, of religion to deism. That may well be called a natural theology which stops at the acknowledgment of God as pure Being, or the inner Reality, or Force, of nature, and such in its infinity that it cannot be known to man, and its attributes even such as cannot be conceived of. This may do for an idea of the God of nature, or of a natural God. It is not yet the God of intelligent souls. It may be a science of God as Being, or mere *Esse*. It is not a science of God as Creator; not, of God as the Word; as the *Existere*; as the Divine Love and Wisdom, going forth in distinct, intelligible forms into the intelligence and recognition of men.

### III. THE WORD AS GOD PRESENT.

We have now seen how God is, by His Word or Wisdom, in the world, in creating it and in redeeming it.

Neither creation nor salvation is a deed accomplished, but is ever being accomplished. God is at this instant creating the world and saving it as truly as in any former time. Existence is perpetual creation, and all orderly and happy life, here and above, is perpetual salvation by Him who is at once Creator, Father, and Saviour. In creating the universe in the beginning, the Word of God clothed itself with the outward forms of inorganic matter and organic life. When the free moral and rational life of man had reached the boundary of its divergence from God, when it had reached that point where to go farther would be to drop humanity for ever and fall beneath the brute into the monster, then the Word clothed itself with that humanity, even to its farthest separation from God, that, breaking the fetters that were crystallizing about it there, the human soul might be free again to respond to the Father's love, to rebound to God, its source. Thus is the Word "gone out into all the ends of the world," that "from the ends of the earth" the souls of men, finding it there, may cry out to it and find in it a loving God and a Saviour. Such is the Word in the Divine work of redemption and in the Divine Humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is become the First and the Last, the inmost and the outmost Man, and God in all.

And finally, where else dwells this creative, this restoring and saving Word, the wisdom of God? The very consciousness of God, but unbeknown to us, it dwells in nature and in our whole being; it gives form to our bodies from the first cell to the whole figure and face radiant with grace and beauty. It gives form to our reasoning power from the simplest impression of sense to the vastest conclusion of our science or philosophy.

But so the Word works in our unconsciousness. It works, in the Divine Humanity, in all the power of God's love put forth to withhold the souls of men from falling into evil, and to draw them into the delights of heaven. But it must still dwell in one other factor,—in an intelligent, willing, reciprocating agent. The Word must have a hearer and an answer ; that hearer and that answer is the mind and heart of a believing man.—“Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” *The answer and the hearing is the Church among men.* It is the body of the faithful ; strictly and internally, of those who “hear the Word of God and do it ;” formally and visibly, of those who hear and publicly profess it. And so we come to that fundamental definition or distinction given by Swedenborg—that “a Church is a Church according to its understanding of the Word.” The Word is the Truth of God—the Form of His love seeking a response from His creature, man, the object of that love, in man’s intellectual and moral nature ; in his intellectual nature, by acknowledgment of God and faith in Him ; in his moral nature, by obedience to His commandments. Where this Word finds no reception and response in man, there is no Church ; the circle of Divine life in creation is broken, and the human race must perish. Where the Word is acknowledged, there the Church is.

#### THE WORD IN THE WORLD’S HISTORY.

And according to the various degrees of the revelation of Divine Truth in different ages, and to the various modes of understanding it and applying it to the forming of life, in different times and places in the history of the

world—so has been the progress of the Churches or of the ages of the world. And as the beginning of a world is the spiritual formation of man, as a reflection of God, by means of the Word, so is the end of a world the destruction or dying out of that spiritual form which the creative Word has given. It is of the beginning and the end of worlds in this sense that the Scriptures treat; the creation of heavens and earths and their passing away, not merely in the plane of physical being, but more in that of moral and spiritual being. So have worlds been formed, and so have worlds come to an end as the Word of God has been received, and perverted, and rejected, and received again by men. These successive ages, æons, or worlds, are the successive Churches which have existed in each, and have been distinguished according to their understanding of the Word. From the golden age of the world, when in childlike innocence the race saw heavenly realities by open vision, and thus read the meaning of nature and found in it verily God's Word written in things of beauty, order, and use; to the succeeding age of symbols, when, in place of celestial realities perceived in immediate vision, the various earthly correspondences or types of spiritual things were used as the reminders of heavenly and Divine things, and also as tokens of man's self-sacrifice and worship; thence to written law and the statutes and ceremonies of a theocracy, a state, in whose wars, conquests, sins, banishment, decline, and restoration are depicted unerringly the fortunes of the kingdom of God in the heart of man; thence to the gospel of grace and truth coming forth alike from the lips, the deeds, the healing touch, the glance of love, the tears of pity, the blood poured out and the prayer sighed forth upon

the cross, of the Word Incarnate, the Conqueror of hell, the Redeemer of the world ; thence to the apocalyptic vision, the New Jerusalem descending from heaven, the final, the everlasting tabernacle of God with men—"the tabernacle which shall not be taken down, not one of the stakes whereof shall ever be removed, neither any of its cords be broken."

#### THE WORD IN THE NEW CREATION.

A Church, a revelation, a religion to endure for ever,—what is this New Jerusalem, this final vision, the fulfilment of all prophecy ? At the end of Scripture it is of no account, or it is of the utmost account ! Is it a mere bauble to be tossed about in the hands of biblical critics, a kind of plaything to amuse the fancy, as Henry Ward Beecher has recently described it, or is it the most real, the most comprehensive and practical part of the whole Bible, because the end to which all tends, the answer to all the soul's longings, hopes, and questions—the realization of all the promises of God's mercy from the beginning of the world till now ?—The New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven ; what is this but another and a final beginning, in which the Word is again the Creator of a new heaven and a new earth ? Is it not the beginning of a new world, a new age, now that the old is passing away—a new world, morally, spiritually, intellectually ? Is not the Word, the formative wisdom and reason of God, making over the mental world to-day in a new revelation of itself to man ? And is not this new revelation such that when received it must abide ; that "its sun shall never go down ;" that its dominion must be an ever-

lasting dominion, and its kingdom that which shall not pass away? Is it not, therefore, the permanent dwelling of God with man? has not the Word at length become actually and finally the presence of God upon the earth?

We have seen what the Word has done in creating the world, both physical and mental, in endowing nature with forms of use, and minds with faculties of use; and what the Word has done in redeeming and saving the worlds thus created; we have seen the Word itself grow forth in a universe, in a written book, and in a Divinely-human life and death on earth. These are all as yet objective revelations and operations of the Word; they are the Word seen and believed from without by man, seen on the surface, touched in the flesh, believed and understood in the letter; as such they were aspects of the Word to pass away, not by being destroyed, but by being fulfilled; not by no longer being seen and felt, but by being allowed no longer to hide the spirit, the life, the essential reality within. “Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed!” The *real* revelation is to the eye within; the real Word is that which speaks not to eye and ear alone, but to understanding, to reason, to heart and soul! When the Word has penetrated there, and there is received, when the reason, in perfect spiritual freedom, has accepted it, and the will of man has submitted to be created anew by this law of life seen to be Divine and loved because it is Divine,—then are the stakes driven and the cords drawn of that tabernacle of God which shall never be removed. The Word of God dwelling in the very reason it has formed, as the highest law, as the most perfect science, the most luminous and sublime philosophy, as the most beautiful of arts and the

soul of all arts, the mother of faith, the spring of all hope and high ambition and desire, the everlasting arm beneath, the wings that bear us up out of the shadow of death,—this is what God seeks in erecting His abiding tabernacle with man. This will be the close embrace of the Father and His child,—this will be the real fruition of creation—the abiding of God with man in such a rational, actual, conscious way that they shall be His people, and He shall be their God.

To this end the old must pass away that the new may be revealed. The old is the apparent, the delusive, the superficial, the outside knowledge or half-knowledge of things. In science, in political affairs, this change from an old to a new world has already taken place. Science has brought to light the inside forces and forms of nature, and is correcting the judgment of the naked eye by the sight of reason and of philosophy ; States are learning the source of power, the true methods of civil and social combination and co-operation. From the outward emblems of power, of law, of right, of justice, the people are striking inward to the things themselves. But beyond what science or political wisdom shall reveal and construct, there comes the creative ray from a higher sun—“the new light shining from the Word of God.”

#### THE SPIRITUAL SENSE OF THE WORD.

For the earth has a meaning deeper than all that the geologist or biologist can find in it from nature alone ; the earth has its spiritual sense, and that spiritual sense of the earth is heaven ! This is what nature means ; it is a book only so far as it contains this Word. And as the

earth has a meaning within and beyond the hammer of the geologist, although explored and brought to light by it, so have the Scriptures a meaning within and beyond the research of learned critics of the text. The spiritual meaning of the written Word lies beneath and within its letter as truly as God and heaven lie within and behind nature ; and the blindness that shall refuse to see God and heaven behind the forms, the evolutions, and the present uses of nature, is the same in character with that theological blindness which shall refuse to see God and heaven in the spiritual meaning now revealed out of and beneath the letter of the written Word. The revelation now given to the world is that of the real in place of the apparent truth regarding God, the spiritual world, and the eternal life. And because these truths are real rather than phenomenal, therefore they will abide. Recognised as from God and not from any man, they constitute the abiding presence of God with man ; resting on the letter, contained within the letter, shaped, held fast, unalterably fixed in the grasp of these Divine symbols and parables, chosen by Him who made the whole universe to be but a parable of His creative Love and Wisdom,—thus fixed in the letter of the written Word, these revelations of spiritual truth must remain like the earth—established for ever in the belief of men. They will form not a new Church alone, but new Churches innumerable on the face of the earth. For it is a new beginning in which the Word, as with God and as God Himself in His second coming to man, is making anew the heavens and the earth. In this coming the apparent gives place to the real ; faith looks through the symbol to the things symbolized ; the authority of tradition, of man, of dogma imposed from

without, gives place to the authority of truth speaking from within, but speaking out of the Word of God. The spiritual sense of the Word, hitherto unknown, is at this day revealed. This opening of the Scriptures is the Second Coming of the Lord, the beginning of a new universal Church, and a new age of the world. Its coming is like every beginning, a separation of light from darkness ; it brings into being forms of beauty, and reveals as clearly by contrast that which is hideous and revolting. Its coming is for ultimate peace and joy ; but for the present it can only bring an apparent increase of conflict ; for this is the “hour of temptation which must come upon all the world !” It is for judgment that the Lord is again come into the world, and it is the Word which He hath spoken, that is everywhere judging the world in this last day.

“Behold, He cometh with clouds ; and every eye shall see Him, and they who pierced Him . . . .”

“And His name is called—The WORD OF GOD.”

THE  
PHILOSOPHY OF SWEDENBORG.



## THE PHILOSOPHY OF SWEDENBORG.

THERE are two ways in which our subject may be treated ; one the historical, the other the psychological. The one would treat of Swedenborg in the light of comparison with other philosophers, ancient and modern, and describe his relation to these. The other would treat of Swedenborg's philosophy in its relation to the development of his own mind, and thus to what he achieved in science on the one hand, and in theology on the other.

It would be a pleasant, and not unprofitable, study to compare Swedenborg, in his character as a philosopher, with some of those few illustrious minds which alone in ancient or modern times can bear comparison with him. We might dwell at length on his striking resemblance to Socrates and Plato, in their representations of the Deity as the Good (compare Plato, *Republic*, vi. 505) ; of the life after death as an unbroken continuance of the present (*Phædo*, 106) ; of the spiritual world as a substantial world and that which gives birth to all that exists here (*Timæus*) ; and of the future life as deriving its happiness or misery from the character of the life led upon earth (*Phædo*, 106). We might compare him with Aristotle in the vastness and variety of his information, in his reverence for nature and the facts of experience, but especially in his recognition of the spiritual faculty which, descending from above, meets in man the ascending degrees of natural

life, and thus constitutes man an immortal and divinely gifted creature, distinguished from brutes and all merely physical productions. (Compare Aristotle, *De Generatione Animalium*, ii. 3.) Coming down to later times, we find Swedenborg in the eighteenth century what Bacon was in the sixteenth, the great exponent of the inductive method in science, content to study and draw conclusions from not theories of things but the things themselves; only where Bacon laid down the method, with comparatively barren illustration, Swedenborg used it, applying it to a vast field of observations, covering almost every department of human learning, and bringing to its test every *a priori* principle, or speculation, which he presents for our adoption. (Compare Bacon's *Preface to the Great Instauration*, and Swedenborg's *Preface to the Principia*.) Again, in Descartes, we find that which reminds us of Swedenborg, in the search for the substantial points and the successive formation of the physical universe (compare *Principia Philosophiae*); his denial of a vacuum, his belief in a vortex and in three kinds of matter, the vortical, or first, being the finer which constitutes the interior of the vortex and forms the sun or stars; the second being the atmospheric, or light-bearing matter; the third being the planetary matter or the gross incrustations originally forming around the first vortex, and ultimately breaking into wandering bodies. In Locke (compare essay on *The Human Understanding*, Book II.), we find the history of ideas as not inborn, but produced by impressions on and through the senses; very similar to Swedenborg's analysis in his work on *The Soul* (comp. Swed. *De Anima*, p. 55); and likewise the admission that in compound ideas the soul has, nevertheless, con-

tributed something (essay Book II. chap. xxiv.) which the mere senses cannot produce. Finally, in Leibnitz (*Principes de la Nature*, etc.) we have the idea of the monads, the rising scale of perceiving substances, or the particles which make up all being, differing only in their reflecting more or less clearly and consciously the other monads, the soul, being the most perfect, reflecting in itself and consciously as a microcosm the whole macrocosm, and vibrating in its state of integrity in response to the great harmony of the universe, and thus to the Divine proceedings or inspirations of the Creator; in which sublime theory we see something of Swedenborg's doctrine of the image of creation in the greatest and the least forms of nature (*Divine Love and Wisdom*, 313, 319); and the reflection in all the universe of a certain harmony of uses, or of the human form; while in Wolf, the distinguished disciple of Leibnitz, we would constantly be reminded of Swedenborg in the philosophic definitions of terms common to both. (See Swedenborg's *Ontology*.) Again, Descartes, while devoutly accepting the Bible as authority, nevertheless held that its purpose was not to teach physical science, and among his followers arose an allegorical school of Scripture interpretation (Meyer, *Philosophia Scripturæ Interpres*, 1666). Leibnitz and Newton, in the later period of their respective careers, devoted themselves largely to pure theology; Newton even elaborating an extensive system of Bible interpretation, according to an internal sense, so called, or what we might more properly name a kind of political historical sense.

From a careful examination of these and similar points of resemblance between Swedenborg and other philosophers, we might derive profit not only in learning how to

relatively value Swedenborg's own philosophical theories, but also in discovering that these occupations of his mind were similar to those of other men of his day, and that in the form of his philosophizing he was not wholly unlike other great thinkers who preceded or accompanied him. Such a study of contemporary philosophy affords us an atmosphere through which to view the man, and by which to depict him. But the medium through which the man is seen is not the man himself. Where, in the form of philosophizing, there may seem to be a resemblance to others, how vastly different is the substance or the content! Wolf, whose philosophy Swedenborg admired, and whom he so much resembles in his definitions, as we learn from his *Ontologia*, was in heart a materialist, believing that nature was the only God. Swedenborg, in his *Principia*, quotes a sentence from Wolf, in which he claims "full liberty for all who philosophize in a philosophical manner," and declares that "from such a liberty no danger need be apprehended to religion, to virtue, and the State." Yet for this very quotation he is called to account by one of his contemporaries, John Christian Cuno (Tafel's *Documents Concerning Swedenborg*, vol. ii. p. 478), not because as a philosopher he dares think independently of revelation, but rather because he dares subordinate his philosophy to revelation, and to make the *theological content* of the philosophy the main thing. Says Cuno: "Mr. Swedenborg as a philosopher is quite modest and unassuming, but as a theologian more than arrogant." How strangely these words sound to us! How clearly they reveal the manner in which Swedenborg was in his day misapprehended, as though these truths which he disclosed as Divine were his own, and he were claiming

some excellence and merit for promulgating them. The philosophers, who, like Wolf, rested in mere philosophy, in "merely mechanical intelligence," were applauded and called great; the man who stole their splendid armour wherewith to fight the war of faith, and to set forward the ramparts of revealed truth, is derided and ignored. The Prelate Oetinger, of Wurtemberg, who had translated portions of the *Arcana Cœlestia*, vol. i., writing to the Duke Charles, says: "Thirty years before reading Swedenborg's *Arcana Cœlestia*, I had studied his *Principia*, which I much preferred to Wolf's on account of its leading to the sacred Scriptures. It is wonderful how a philosopher who was accustomed to think according to the rules of mechanics should have become a prophet. . . . I did not take counsel with flesh and blood, but translated the work in the sight of God, thinking that the foolishness of God is wiser than the mechanical intelligence of man."

"I was once asked,"<sup>1</sup> says Swedenborg, "how from being a philosopher I became a theologian, and I answered, 'In the same manner that fishermen became the disciples and apostles of the Lord, and that I also had from early youth been a spiritual fisherman.' On this he asked, 'What is a spiritual fisherman?' I replied, 'A fisherman in the spiritual sense of the word, signifies a man who investigates and teaches natural truths, and afterward spiritual truths in a rational manner.'"

In Oetinger's expressions we see clearly defined the real relation of Swedenborg to the philosophy of his time. He was, namely, a man who was accustomed "to think according to the rules of mechanics," and who instead of

<sup>1</sup>This question was put by Oetinger in his letter to Swedenborg, *Doc.*, vol. ii. p. 1033.

arriving at a denial of God or the supernatural, as did so many of his contemporaries, made this very mechanical form of thought the vehicle of bringing before the world a vast scheme of spiritual science, amounting to a new revelation of God and of the Bible, veritably a new heaven and a new earth.

It has been customary among the religious followers of Swedenborg, to divide his life and works into two periods, the scientific and the theological, including in the former all that preceded the date of his spiritual illumination, and his beginning the exposition of the spiritual sense of the Scriptures in the *Arcana Cœlestia*. Those, too, whose reading of Swedenborg has been confined exclusively to his theological writings, have perhaps not unnaturally embraced the notion that not only the subject-matter therein treated of, the "things heard and seen" there related, were revealed to Swedenborg, and thus of supernatural origin, but that the "rational manner," or the form of thought and expression in which these higher realities found their receptacles and their means of expression, were also matters of revelation.

It will help to our attaining a more accurate view on the subject if we now glance for a moment at Swedenborg the philosopher, as distinguished from both the scientist on the one hand, and the theologian on the other. We must look at the philosophy of Swedenborg, not only in its relation to other philosophical systems, whether ancient or contemporary, but in its relation to Swedenborg's own mental development, to what he had before achieved in pure science, and what he afterwards was instrumental in revealing in pure theology.

In this psychological study of Swedenborg's philosophy

we shall be best guided by his own analysis of the human mind and of the corresponding degrees or kinds of knowledge of which the mind is capable. The mind, in its organization, reflects the form and order of all being, which is, namely, that of three planes or degrees, to be named end, cause, and effect. These three exist in every created thing. And these three degrees have their origin in a corresponding trine of degrees in God, namely, the Divine love, which is the end; the Divine wisdom, which is the cause; and the Divine operation, or use, which is the effect. The whole universe of being, including God the Creator, may be regarded as a One, embracing God as its end, the spiritual world as its cause, the natural world as its effect. The human mind has its three planes, called by Swedenborg the celestial, the spiritual, and the natural. To the highest plane of the mind is given wisdom, or the perception of ends; to the middle plane of the mind is given intelligence, or an understanding of causes; to the natural plane of the mind is given science, or a knowledge of effects. We have therefore three faculties in ascending order:—

I. The senses, by which experience of nature is possible, and which gives us scientific ideas or facts, and in which we are conscious of the effects of creation.

II. The reason or intelligence, which arranges, subordinates, and interprets these facts according to the direction of an underlying law or cause.

III. The soul, or wisdom, to which is given to perceive the end itself, and thence to understand the cause of things, and to truly know effects.

Hence we see the relative positions of science, philosophy, and theology; science being the knowledge of

effects, or of the natural world ; philosophy, the intelligence of causes or of laws underlying all nature and all supernatural operations ; and theology, the knowledge of God, the Creator and Source, and of the Divine ends in creating the universe.

We may arrive at this distinction between science, philosophy, and theology in another way. Man, says Swedenborg, is not life, but a form recipient of life. All life is sustained in two ways : by what is received from without and from within. This is true of minds as well as bodies. The mind receives from without the impressions of the senses ; from within, its affections or animating motives and desires which come from the spiritual world. Between the two is the receptacle of the mind or intellect itself, the mould which fashions, the instrument which uses, these two supplies of life. Philosophy, or the higher exercise of the reason, is what stands thus midway between nature and the supernatural, between sensuous impressions and the intuitions of the soul, subordinating and moulding the one into conformity with the law imposed by the other. This is in accordance with Swedenborg's own statement in his *Preface to the Principia*, where he treats of the means conducive to a true philosophy. These, he says, are three in number—experience, geometry, and the rational faculty. By experience he means "the knowledge of everything in the world of nature which is capable of being received through the medium of the senses" (*Principia*, i. 4). It is not wisdom, but the medium that leads to it. Experience is science ; it is the threshold by which wisdom may be approached. He who is possessed of scientific knowledge, and is merely skilled in experiment, has only taken the first step to

wisdom ; such a person is only acquainted with what is posterior ; he is ignorant of what is prior ; his wisdom does not extend beyond the organs of his senses, and is unconnected with reason ; when, nevertheless, true wisdom embraces both (p. 12). The second medium leading to wisdom is geometry and rational philosophy, by which we are enabled to compare our experiments, and reduce them to laws, rules, and analogies (p. 14). Under the empire of geometry we may rank the whole mineral and vegetable kingdoms, and also the animal too, in respect to mechanical organs, or in respect to its anatomical, vegetable, and organic relations. But in respect to the soul, we cannot think it possible that its emotions or actions can be explained or comprehended by any of the known laws of motion (p. 3). The whole world itself, as consisting of the elements and of the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, is a pure system of mechanism, and so also is the animal kingdom as to its anatomical organization (p. 15). But there are innumerable things which are not mechanical, nor even geometrical, and which therefore do not fall under the empire of geometry. Such is the infinite which is prior to geometry, being its cause, and which cannot be explored by geometry ; such is the intelligent principle which exists in animals, the soul ; such is a Providence in the Infinite respecting all things, and hence a connection or series of consequents according to which all circumstances are determined and arranged by causes and the causes of causes toward a certain end ; such is love, to which the ancients attributed the production of the universe. But since intelligence in the soul is not mechanical, but the mode in which the soul operates, in what does the essential, rational, and

intelligent principle consist? It does not consist in knowing many things which the world naturally exhibits to the senses, for this knowledge refers itself to experience; it does not consist in knowing the figures and spaces in which motion terminates; this is the province of geometry; it does not consist in knowing the proportions and rules of figures and motions by which the world produces its phenomena, for these belong to nature, science, mechanics, and philosophy. But the rational principle consists in knowing how to arrange into such order and connection the reasons and proportional facts known from the world as to view their analogy. This presupposes an active principle, or certain force, impelling into motion all those things which inhere, as it were, scientifically in its organs, that is, it presupposes a soul. The rational principle in the soul, therefore, is the continual analysis of those things which are scientifically, as it were, inherent in its organs (pp. 27, 28, 29).

In these definitions, it is to be observed, Swedenborg does not claim to have arrived at the highest knowledge, that of the soul, or of the infinite, nor that philosophy can attain thus far. The most that he aspires to in the *Principia*, indeed, is to attain to certain hidden things in the elemental world invisible and remote from our senses, and from things known and seen, to arrive at conclusions by analytical reason regarding things unknown. "These, however, unless they be principles to which experiment, observation, and geometry agree, are to be regarded," he says, "as the mere figments and dreams of a delirious mind" (p. 32).

The content of that higher faculty, the wisdom or perception of the soul, must come from some other source

than merely analytical reasoning or philosophy. "The philosopher," he says, "sees indeed that God governs His creation by rules and mechanical laws, and that the soul governs the body in like manner; he may even know what those rules and mechanical laws are; but to know the nature of that Infinite Being, from whom, as from their fountain, all things in the world derive their existence and subsistence, to know the nature of that supreme intelligence, with its infinite arcana, this is an attainment beyond the sphere of his limited capacity. When, therefore, the philosopher has arrived at the end of his studies, even supposing him to have acquired so complete a knowledge of all mundane things that nothing more remains for him to learn, he must then stop; for he can never know the nature of the Infinite Being, of His supreme intelligence, supreme providence, supreme love, supreme justice, and other infinite attributes. He will therefore acknowledge that in respect to this supremely intelligent and wise Being his knowledge is as nothing; he will hence most profoundly venerate Him with the utmost devotion of soul" (p. 35). This language, though in some places reminding one of the agnosticism of our day, yet is as far removed as possible from the agnostic position as now held. By man's incapacity to know God, Swedenborg does not surely mean an absolute incapacity; since if man cannot know God by some means, how can he know that He is intelligence and love, and how can man adore that of which he knows nothing? Swedenborg evidently means man's inability to know God from pure philosophy, or apart from the revelation which God, or the Infinite, makes of Himself.

"As by the grace of God," says Swedenborg, in his

work *On the Infinite* (p. 85), "we have all these matters revealed in Holy Scripture, so where reason is hindered in its apprehensions we must at once have recourse to revelation ; and when we cannot discover from revelation either what we should adopt, or in what sense we should understand its declarations, we must then fly to this oracle of reason. In this way natural theology must proffer her hand to revealed, where the meaning of revelation seems doubtful, and revealed theology must lend her guidance in turn to rational theology when reason is in straits ; for revealed and rational theology can never be contrary to each other ; if the latter be truly rational and does not attempt to penetrate into the mysteries of infinity. In which case it is not truly rational."

A further illustration of the true relation of philosophy to science and to revelation, we shall find in Swedenborg's description, in the posthumous work *De Anima*, of the manner in which the images of sight are converted into sensations of the brain, and into ideas of the imagination. Here we shall see again the meeting of two forces or influences, the one from without, or below, the other from above, and a consequent direction, arrangement, and subordination of the lower to the higher, by means of an intermediately intellectual or rational faculty. In this work (*De Anima*, p. 55), in the chapter on Perception, Imagination, and Memory, our author says : "There can be no idea in the imagination which is not in the memory, and no idea in the memory which has not been in the sense ; hence all parts of the imagination are insinuated through the senses alone. But inasmuch as the order of similars, their harmony, their form, does not depend on

this sensory but on a higher and purer intellect, it follows that something more than memory alone is required for the imagination. For it is not owing to the memory that those ideas called forth are rightly put together. This is rather the result of the pure intellect itself, or of the soul, whose nature it is to understand the harmonies and the orders of things. Hence the imagination exists in proportion to the communication existing between the pure intellect and the ideas of the memory. The orderly arrangement of the parts of the memory does not come from the senses but from the pure intellect, and thus from the soul, which is the order, the love, the truth, the light, the ruler of its own system. But we confound this order with the ideas, or the determination or order of parts with the parts themselves. And from our observing that the order is natural or innate, we believe also that the ideas are innate also."

This beautiful analysis shows distinctly how far Swedenborg as a philosopher stands removed from the materialists of our day, even when in part adopting their language and asserting emphatically their strongest positions. Thus our ideas, he says, come through the sensations, or are, properly speaking, interior sensations of the brain; and yet no thought and no reasoning, no classification nor comparison of ideas, exists apart from the intellect, or the faculty of the soul. In the same line of reasoning he says further (p. 56), "No speech can originate from imagination alone. Both intellect and thought are requisite to speech, for in mere composition of words there is something intellectual, analytical, and philosophical, yea, spiritual."

From this examination of Swedenborg's own definitions,

I have endeavoured to show what relation his philosophical thinking and writing holds to his scientific and theological works. Do we not find here the "rational manner of investigating truths" (*Intercourse of Soul and Body*, No. 20); "the pure intellect which arranges in order the ideas of sense" (*De Anima*, p. 56); "the analytic, philosophical, and distinct rationality which is the immediate effluence and minister of the soul"? (*On the Infinite*, p. 87). Have we not in Swedenborg's philosophy, viewed in itself, a form of reasoning rather than a content, a faculty of arranging into harmony and order the facts and experiments furnished rather than the facts and experiments themselves? As a philosopher, Swedenborg did not create ideas, but he sought them, arranged them, and made them serve the high purposes of the soul. It would be difficult by any merely chronological divisions to distinguish the scientific and the philosophical works. We might with some propriety designate those works more eminently scientific which preceded the year 1734, including the *Principia*. The treatise *On the Infinite*, published also in that year, seems to begin the great philosophical series, which includes the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* (1740), the *Animal Kingdom* (1744), in its several parts, and the only recently translated treatise, *De Anima*. Looking upon the work, *On the Worship and Love of God*<sup>1</sup> (1745), as a kind of nexus or transition, we come to the beginning of the theological period with the first volume of the *Arcana Cœlestia*, published in 1749. In the works of the first period, which I have called scientific, our author treats of the objective physical world exclusively, even in his *Principia* his highest aim being to arrive at the occult

<sup>1</sup> See the concluding essay of this volume.

things of the elementary world. In his philosophical works, especially the *Animal Kingdom* and the *Economy*, he treats of the occult things of the human body, and aims at a knowledge of the soul itself. It is the kingdom of the soul<sup>1</sup> that he here investigates, in distinction from the kingdoms of nature that have hitherto occupied his studies. But in his search for the soul in her inmost principles he both succeeded and failed. He succeeded so far as by the closest analogical reasoning it is possible to infer from the known and visible to the unknown and hidden, and thus carried far beyond sight and experiment the train of thought which defines the soul in her mechanical relations to the body and to nature. But as to the essence—the content of the soul itself—this remains still immeasurably above the philosopher's grasp. It is true, he defines it as a natural subject accommodated at once to the beginning of motion and to the reception of life. He further calls it the spirituous fluid, whose office it is to represent the universe, not only naturally but intellectually. But this spirituous fluid, this exalted essence which eludes our finest physical sense and exhibits itself only to our highest imagination, is still a form and receptacle rather than life itself, for “life is to the soul what the soul is to mind or to sensations” (*Economy*, ii. p. 277). Of the spirituous fluid which he sometimes identifies with the soul (ii. p. 249), sometimes calls “the other self of the soul” (p. 286), he says, “It enters the blood as the first, highest, inmost, remotest, and most perfect substance and force of the body, the sole and proper animal force and the determining principle of all things” (p. 214). “It derives its

<sup>1</sup> *Regnum Animale* in the sense of soul-kingdom.

being from a still higher substance, and proximately from those things in which the principles of natural things are impressed by the Deity, and in which the most perfect forces of nature are involved. To the body it is the form of forms ; to the microcosm it is what the aura is to the macrocosm " (p. 219). " It is the formative substance " (p. 220). " On account of the influx of the Divine life, which is the principal cause of the animate kingdom, this purest fluid, which is the instrumental cause, is the spirit and soul of the body, hence we call it the spirituous fluid " (pp. 232-234).

Thus the search for the soul has ended, after all, only in the discovery of a mode or form of existence rather than the living thing itself. The soul thus discovered by this rational " analysis of the things scientifically inherent in its organs," is at the last but a " formative substance," an instrumental and not a first cause. Thus far, whether in science or philosophy, we have been climbing by successive rounds of the ladder up toward the goal of real, Divine substance and life ; here on the highest round we stop, unable to climb further, and yet the veil is not lifted, the boundless gaze into infinity is not opened to us. We can see the steps by which we have risen, we can describe them, we have learned how to climb further, but no higher step is visible ; the utmost of natural knowledge and natural philosophy has been attained.

What shall reveal to us that which is still higher, still beyond ? What shall reveal to us the nature of the soul itself ; the nature of Deity ; the Divine laws of spiritual life ; the moral government of the universe ; the laws of the soul's relations to other souls in the society of the city of God, and of its relations to God as its heavenly

Father and Lawgiver? Here is where philosophy and natural science are both silent, and where Divine theology with revelation as its new continent opens anew a higher world to the soul's reason, and invites the reverent scientist and philosopher into novel and delightful fields of exploration and study.

All science is but the study of effects; all philosophy but the study of means and laws, while true theology is the study of ends and the Being in whom these ends reside. "The universe," says Swedenborg, "is nothing but a complex of means to a universal end. To what purpose are the auras but to minister to corresponding sensations in the animal kingdom? for what purpose are sensations but to produce intellectual ideas in human minds? For what purpose are intellectual ideas unless to subserve the supreme life or wisdom? These are in themselves only mediate or instrumental causes and aspirations to the ideas of wisdom, but not until they enter the supreme sphere do they begin to be wise. Thus one thing is the instrumental cause and means of the other: modification of sensation, sensation of intelligence, intelligence of wisdom, and by wisdom all are made into something, because by wisdom they exist for the sake of something, and they are made into essences by Him who is essential being and wisdom" (*Economy*, p. 356).

So does the philosopher express the truth thus divinely worded: "All things were made by Him" (the Logos or Wisdom), "and without Him was not anything made that was made."

If philosophy, then, is the study of the form and order of things, while science is the study of the material

of things, and theology the study of the soul and essential being of all things and their end or purpose in creation, we shall here find a method of classification to which the writings of Swedenborg will more satisfactorily yield themselves than to any other. It would be indeed absurd to say that in his scientific writings distinctly so recognised, those in which he treats of pure physics or the elementary world without any regard to the soul or a spiritual organizing principle, there is no exercise of that higher rational faculty which is essential to philosophy. Swedenborg himself calls his *Principia*, which is eminently a work of physical science, a philosophic search after the occult things in nature. The subject-matter being, however, that which belongs to the plane of effects enables us to truly designate this whole field of labour, however philosophically treated, as belonging to the domain of science. So it would be equally unreasonable to say that in the philosophical treatises on the Animal Kingdom and on the Infinite, there is nothing of science, when these great works are nothing but inductions from the data of science, a reasoning by analogies from the known to the unknown. Still, as the object of search is rather the world of causes, the laws by which the soul rules in her empire—this again, we may say, is what characterizes this whole division of Swedenborg's productions as philosophical. Finally, in the unfolding of the internal sense of the Scriptures, in the treatises on the *Divine Love and Wisdom*, on the *Divine Providence*, and the descriptions of the spiritual world, it would be quite erroneous to say that both science and philosophy, or the most careful rational analysis and inductions, have here given way to mere ecstatic vision and rhapsody.

On the contrary, the same great mental instrument is here used as on the lower field of observation, only a new, a higher kind of vision and of sense is opened to its investigations. The philosophy is still the same, the "same rational manner of investigating truths," the same "mechanical reasoning," indeed, now employed by the prophet that was formerly employed by the "fisherman." Yea, even science itself does not retire from these new elysian fields, but quickened with a brighter vision sees a world of wonders opening wider out beyond its familiar and well-pondered forms of matter, and testifies, to our senses, of that wonderful law of correspondences or analogies between the spiritual and natural worlds, which revelation has declared to the soul. Nevertheless, while both science and philosophy are embodied in an eminent sense in his theology, still the subject-matter being the Divine life and love itself, its ends in creating the universe, and its proceeding in the accomplishment of these ends even to the regeneration of the human soul and its elevation into the life of an angel in heaven—this distinctly sets off the theological from both the philosophical and scientific portions of his writings.

Just here it is interesting to note that subtle and far-reaching distinction traceable even in the terms Swedenborg uses in the philosophical and theological works respectively regarding both the object of study and the kind of knowledge attainable in each. The highest conception of God in the mind of the philosopher is a Being of infinite wisdom; but to the theologian God is no longer wisdom primarily, but love. In the rational investigation of the order of nature or of the mechanical universe, philosophy is invoked. In the spiritual world,

when the essence of things is revealed to the soul's vision, it is no longer human philosophy that is our teacher, but the "wisdom of angels."

Here the question will not unnaturally arise : Since, then, it was rather the new content or substance of truth that was afforded Swedenborg in his illumination, and not any essentially new rational faculty or way of thinking or of investigating truth, what shall we say of those great laws of the new or spiritual science which form so conspicuous and so imposing a part of his whole theological system—especially the laws of correspondences, and of the three discrete degrees ? Are these, then, not a part of the revelation, or did they belong to that splendid accoutrement of a philosophic reasoning power learned and developed during the earlier and preparatory career of Swedenborg's life ? The latter would seem to be the true statement, and indeed to be most in harmony with the laws of mental action which the author lays down. In the passage already quoted from the *De Anima*, he has warned us not to confound the determination or order of the parts with the parts themselves, or the order of ideas with the ideas themselves. The order of ideas, or what we would call the *laws of thought*, are innate in the mind ; the substances of the thought, the ideas themselves, these come into the mind from without, "from things heard and seen," whether in the spiritual or natural world. As a matter of fact, the law of correspondences is clearly outlined in Swedenborg's work entitled the *Hieroglyphic Key*, which, according to Wilkinson, belongs to the same period with the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* (1740), and in this work there is an allusion to "correspondences and their application ;"

while in the work on the *Animal Kingdom*, vol. i. p. 10, the author enumerates certain new doctrines which are to constitute an introduction to rational psychology, amongst which are the doctrine of forms, the *doctrine of order and degrees*, the doctrine of series and societies, the doctrine of influx, the *doctrine of correspondence* and *representation*.

The doctrine of degrees is treated at length in the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* (vol. ii. p. 204). He calls it a principal part of the natural sciences, and in its higher applications he declares it to be the science of sciences by which we arrive at a true judgment of things by separating, namely, from things simultaneous, things successively involved in them, or by which we abstract causes, and causes of causes (ends), from the effects in which these causes appear (p. 205).

It is true, indeed, that the doctrine of discrete degrees forms the entire contents of Part III. of the *Wisdom of Angels concerning the Divine Love and Wisdom*, and that Swedenborg declares in No. 188 of that work that nothing has hitherto been known, as far as he is aware, of the discrete degrees or degrees of altitude, but only of continuous degrees. While the degrees alluded to in the passages quoted from in the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom* would seem to belong to the order of discrete degrees, yet it is true that this term is not there used, and the doctrine itself in its clear and wonderful form does not anywhere appear until it is presented in the splendour of a heavenly light, illustrated as it there is with wonderful examples drawn from the constitution of that world of causes. The same may be said of correspondences; while these peculiar forms of comparing and

judging of things seem to have been conceived in the philosophic mind of Swedenborg, all the illustrations and applications of them presented in the scientific and philosophic works seem tame and gross as compared with their celestial beauty as exhibited in the spiritual world and in the spiritual sense of the Scriptures, and are thus embodied in the theological works. The instrument remains the same, but the matter treated exalts and glorifies the instrument so that we hardly recognise it as the same.

I have thus endeavoured to show in what real manner Swedenborg the Philosopher stands between the Man of Science and the Theologian, and that his philosophy as a “rational manner of investigating truth” stands similarly between the merely mechanical science of the senses and the wisdom of angels. That it was a purely human rationality, and thus a human philosophy in its method, and indeed in its content up to the time of our author’s illumination, there can be no question; but it is the rational faculty that makes man capable of being a spiritual creature in distinction from the animal, and that can make all human science to be but the magnificent clothing of divinity; and it is not too bold an assertion that probably, viewed in its historical connection, the philosophy of Swedenborg represents the highest attainment the human reason has ever reached. This philosophy was simply that perfectly adequate, rational equipment of a human mind now divinely called to lead human thought and faith up to a higher plane of truth than any hitherto revealed. The world may attach the notions of “folly” and “madness” to the supernatural content of that system of reasoning when

applied to Divine and supernatural things. We know how to translate the term "madness" as thus used, having seen what Plato says of the ancient identity of the words *madness* and *prophecy*, and what "foolishness" the Apostle chose to preach to the Greeks to save them from the "wisdom of this world;" but the man who thinks soundly will hardly find a flaw in the rational system itself; this still appeals with all the old vigour of exact logical argument and strict analogy, and even of the "mechanical intelligence" of the most unimaginative and practical common sense. We will leave the "madness" to justify itself; the reason in it, however, we have to acknowledge as our own in kind, and as a lofty and splendid exhibition of what this our distinctively human faculty is capable, at its best, of achieving. Not that the reason was henceforth to act, as heretofore, in the function of a discoverer or inventor. Henceforth it was not in laborious deductions from hidden *a priori* principles that the reason is to be employed, but rather in the field of supernatural intuitions, in the delightful studies of "things heard and seen," of a truly objective and tangible world of spiritual substance. But the reason that enters upon this lofty flight, this career amid the eternal realities of the upper world, is not an untrained charioteer likely to become giddy. The reins of those noble steeds, the intelligences, are in safe and steady hands; the philosopher may gaze with clear, undazzled vision upon what to the feebler mind would bring blindness or confusion. The "science of order and of degrees" had not been learned in vain now that a world was opened to view where principles are no longer abstract from things, but exhibited in the very things themselves.

How wonderful and how adorable, to conclude, is that Providence which in furthering the progress of human society prepared such an instrument for such a work! On what a wonderful science was that philosophy matured; and what a sublime philosophy was that which, entering the worlds hitherto invisible save to the eye of faith or of ecstasy, now clad in the armour of a disciplined reason, with the cold glance of the intellect surveyed unmoved both its glories and its terrors, and embodied those things heard and seen in a system of theology which in its rational consistency and symmetry is unparalleled in the theologies of the world; of which it may be truly said, even in this day of rationalistic doubt and unbelief, *nunc licet intellectualiter intrare in mysteria fidei.* [Vera Chr. Rel., No. 508, Swedenborg.] And what a philosopher is this to contemplate, whom at the close of his ambitious and splendid conquests in the realm of natural knowledge we leave, not defiant, proud, and confident, seeking other heights to scale, but, rather, on his knees before the gates of paradise, waiting for their opening! Listen to the conclusion of his treatise on the Human Soul in the second part of the *Economy of the Animal Kingdom*.

“Is there not an ascent from the created universe through human intelligences or souls to Him as the last end who was the first, through that which was the all in the means? And do not those souls exist for an end beyond nature—an end that they penetrate into by intuition, and which is no other than the existence of a society of souls in which the end of creation may be regarded by God, and by which God may be regarded as the end of ends?

“If there be a society of souls, must not the city of

God on the universal earth be the seminary of it? The most universal law of its citizens is, that they love their neighbour as themselves, and God more than themselves. All other things are means, and are good in proportion as they lead directly to this end. Now as everything in the universe is created as a means to this end, it follows that the application of the means, and a true regard of the end in the means, are the sole constituents of a citizen. The Holy Scripture is the code of rules for obtaining the end by the means. These rules are not so dark or obscure as the philosophy of the mind and the love of self and of the world would make them; nor so deep and hidden but that any sincere soul which permits the Spirit of God to govern it, may draw them from this pure fountain, pure enough for the use and service of the members of the city of God all over the world, without violating any form of ecclesiastical government. It is foretold that the kingdom of God shall come; that at last the guests shall be assembled to the marriage supper; that the wolf shall lie down with the lamb, the leopard with the kid, the lion with the ox; that the young child shall play with the asp; that the mountain of God shall rise above all other mountains, and that the Gentile and the stranger shall come to it to pay their worship." (See Second Epistle of Paul to Timothy iii. 1-10; Acts of the Apostles xvii. 18-24.)



## **THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.**



## THE CHURCH AND SCIENCE.

SAYS Professor Goldwin Smith, in a magazine article which appeared a few years ago: "On the progress of science we may count; and this is so important as to make us feel that humanity altogether has struck into the right path. Yet if we shut our ears for a moment to the pæans which are being sung over telegraphs and telephones, we become conscious that while science has been making miraculous strides, the masses have not yet made strides equally miraculous, either in character or in happiness."

The tendency of the age is to the secularizing of all knowledge and all aims. Religion, as far as it involves the idea of a supernatural law and a revealed system of truth, is to give place to a system of morals based upon the industrial arts and the science of social living. No stronger proof need be desired of Swedenborg's declaration that we are come to the end of the world, than that in the highest places in Christendom people speak in a kind of awe and veneration of men who clearly and frankly make it their aim in science to prove the sufficiency of nature without God, and the sufficiency of social science for the data of ethics without a revelation.

The strides made in natural science have indeed been so stupendous, that were there no corresponding new

worlds of spiritual truth opened to our knowledge at this day, the preponderance of physical studies and interests would be so great that the spiritual exercise of the human reason would almost be at a standstill. But it is a noticeable part of Divine prophecy that, at the time when the stars of heaven shall have fallen to the earth, at that very time a new glory shall be seen coming in the clouds. The vast accumulation of sensuous and physical knowledge has not come about without a Divine purpose behind it. God has a use for these heaps of dust atoms, even though the fact-gatherers think to bury deep in them the fallen stars so that men shall not look up any more ; still there is a glory coming from above which shall find its reflection in every little shining facet, and make the whole earth blaze again with its confession of a Divine Creator.

To the orthodox religionists of to-day science is indeed an uncomfortable intruder. Tolerated as a body-servant, it cannot be endured as a spiritual adviser, and is accordingly shown the door. Outside it begins naturally enough to throw stones at the windows. But what the continued advance of science may become as a housemate of the secular or mechanical system of morals remains to be seen, and some dim outlines of the prospective substitute for religion are not reassuring. May not this new Prometheus yet become a fearful, monstrous power, which even the gods of science may tremble to look at ?

The physical, or, at most, the industrial sciences are looked to by the scientist for the future redemption of society. "Everything is justifiable that advances physical knowledge" seems to be an accepted law of the new religion, and the reason given is, that this tends to

relieve man's body of pain or to increase the amount of physical pleasure in the world; in the same way the industrial arts are elevated above the intellectual sciences because they tend to relieve man of the necessity of bodily labour, or at least to allow a greater number of men to live without labour, while at the same time the remainder who do labour are reduced as far as possible to the level of unintelligent machines. If we may call the second commandment of the new religion of science to live without labour, then we can see how the progress of industrial arts will assuredly promote the new virtues into which our morality is to be evolved. In fact, we may say that we have already some uncomfortable knowledge of that new virtue as we come in contact with it in some of the industries which concern our everyday wants. But what will society become when entirely regenerated? The less cunning,—or shall we say the less virtuous?—at all events the weakest will go down to drive the machines; while the virtuous, or the richer, or the stronger, now in so vast a predominance as to embrace all the race (barring the merest remnant of the servile class necessary for the mechanical uses, which, like dregs, only serve to clarify the wine), will devote themselves to what—well, shall we say it at last?—to the promotion of the industrial arts as the highest and last—yea, the religious and true aim of man. Surely it will not do at that high stage of regeneration to change signals and begin now to talk of such things as natural, moral, and spiritual culture—that is, as things separate from the steam engine and the electric light. If the industrial arts or the bettering of our bodily condition is the highest good, if that man is the best reformer of society who relieves his fellow-men of the most labour

or the most pain, then what virtuous employment is left when all labour is performed by the utilized forces of nature, and all men live luxuriously? Even now some of our modern improvements seem almost too much improved, or at least we do not seem to have grown up to such a plane of humanity as to truly enjoy some of the great facilities science has afforded us to-day; we are not sure that we are either happier or better with them than our fathers were without them; but what shall we think of that kind of humanity which, having perfected man's bodily existence on earth, having no belief in a spiritual world, and no expectation of living after the body dies, can only find its moral incentive in inventing new and more exquisite conditions of bodily existence, and cultivating in society a more exquisite sense of these sublimated delights, and finding in all natural science ever new and deeper confirmations of this survival of the physically best as the true revelation and the true religion.

It may be urged that utilitarian morals do not aim to the diminishing of industries, but to their increase, and that in a proper "division of labour" lies a highway to the reformation of society. But this again seems to be an assumption which, while it sounds well, does not stand the light of either history or common experience. Goldwin Smith instances not only the familiar domestic examples of the way industry promotes industry, as the plumber's happy way of making work for the carpenters, and the servant girl's thoughtful destruction of crockery to encourage that useful and ornamental manufacture, but, what is more significant, he calls to the witness-stand the Chinese nation, which for industry and the division of labour has been an example for centuries before our

modern civilisation had dawned, and yet the answer this nation gives as to the effect produced on the morals or the happiness of the race by this religion of industrial science is not a cheering one.

Again, we are aware that Herbert Spencer in his anxious search for a new basis of ethics, asks whether the moral ideas and sentiments may not be certain modes of feeling and thinking caused naturally in men by experience of the conditions of happiness, and whether the authority of such moral ideas will not be just as peremptory in man as would be that of supernaturally caused modes of thinking and feeling, which tend to make men fulfil the conditions of happiness? (*Art. Contemporary Review*, March 1882). This, when reduced to scientific phrase and stripped of its semi-religious sanctimony, means, I suppose, that not only man, but the savage, the ape, the mollusc, the moner, the atom, had always for their highest ideal and highest law of conduct certain conditions of happiness already experienced; that is, our moral law lies always in what is behind and below us in the order of life, and not in what is beyond and above us. Man's highest motive to do right is the accumulation of happy experiences of savage and ape in repeating the former happy experiences of mollusc, moner, and atom. Not only is it backward and downward, but it is essentially dustward that all this morality looks for its laws. And here we may fitly recall the simple but great words—great because simple and true, words of a poet whom all the world loved, and who will speak to the hearts of the world for generations to come:

“Dust thou art: to dust returnest,  
Was not spoken of the soul.”

And so in whatever fine words this religion of industrial art may air itself, and whatever pious tears it may shed, its soul, for all its highest and noblest incentives, must go back to the body and some old savage or atomic pleasure or pain after all, and its highest worship, when analysed faithfully and fearlessly, turns out to be the worship of matter and of nothing beyond.

Is there, then, no higher use of science than the industrial use? Or, in other words, is there no higher use than the promotion of the happiness or excellence of a bodily life, meaning a life that begins and ends with the earthly body, and which is only a certain coincidence of material atoms and their appropriate forces?

We answer that there is such higher use for science, and we call it its human in place of its mechanical use. It is its use to the human soul as an immortal creature, and as one above and distinct from matter, and as moved by forces entirely distinct from any physical or mechanical force. It is its use, in one word, and that the word as defined by Swedenborg, its use to the *rational mind*; and this, be it borne in mind, means something world-wide different from the repetition of past conditions of happiness. The water may love to run down hill for aught we know, and the cow find a high degree of satisfaction in chewing her cud, but they will neither of them learn the rule of three by doing so, even if they wait a thousand eons. By a soul, therefore, we mean something different from the atom and its force, and different from all the constructions of many atoms and their forces and conditions. And the use of science for the soul can only be seen and can only be experienced by

those who acknowledge the existence of a soul in this its own distinct and elevated plane.

The service which science renders the soul is in furnishing and cultivating the rational, and through the rational the spiritual, plane of the mind. In a lower sense, and one which we have already considered, science furnishes and cultivates the body ; this is its industrial use ; but its service to the rational part of man is its educational use ; and, finally, its service to the spiritual plane is its highest or religious use.

The educational use of science is like the use of all form to its substance, and all matter to spirit. Scientific facts are not truths, but the vessels of truth ; they are the shell which may have good or bad meat within. The rational principle is what, under Divine influence, makes all scientific knowledge subservient to the spiritual or inner man, and puts sound meat in the shell, first by enabling man to think—that is, to analyse, reflect upon, and draw conclusions from mere isolated facts ; second, to apply these thoughts or conclusions to useful living, to the benefit, first of his own body as his chief instrument of use ; then to the perfecting of his mind as the agent of a higher use ; then to the communication of good to others. The rational makes a man capable of thus using his mind, his body, and all knowledge derived through the senses for these higher purposes ; but whether a man do so or not depends upon the still interior motive of his will. If he be in the acknowledgment of a Divine being and a desire to shun evils of life as sins against Him, his applying of science to mental and bodily uses will be done from the genuine love of use, and his whole natural mind will thus be made to serve the spiritual, and the rational will be the

instrument or medium of this. Thus science, in furnishing material of thought and reflection for the rational, will also be enabling man to live a more essentially rational life, and by its myriads of facts will be furnishing illustration and corroboration of spiritual or revealed truth to the believing soul. The sciences themselves become thus capable of a threefold classification, namely, into strictly natural sciences so far as applied to industrial arts, and as serving the bodily wants, and thus forming the basis of the mind ; the civil and moral sciences, which have to do with man's relation to his fellow-man in society ; and the spiritual sciences, or those revealed truths which relate to things of heaven and the Church—in general, to the good of charity and the truth of faith. A man does not become rational by merely knowing these several orders of truth, but by living according to them, or by loving them from a spiritual affection, which is to love what is just and good and true because they are just and good and true. A man can esteem these same principles also from a bodily affection, which is to love them for the sake of self, or reputation, or honour, or gain ; so far as a man loves truths from such bodily affection, he does not become rational, for he does not love the principles themselves, but himself. The reason then becomes itself unsound. (See *D. L. W.*, 23.) What, then, shall we say of a science whose frankly-avowed purpose is to reason God out of science, or to show that all physics and ethics are as intelligible, as truthful, and as useful without the recognition and worship of a supreme intelligence and love as with it ?

Again, any science is useful so far as it answers useful questions, and a science is useful to the soul as far as it answers the soul's questions. But what questions can a

science answer which knows, and professes to know, effects and effects only? Truly, many useful questions in the arts and their application, for these are only the arrangement and adjustment of effects ; but these sciences which thus keep up a busy race around and around the foot of the hill of human intelligence never rise to a higher plane, but rather deepen the level of this well-worn footpath.

What shall we conclude, therefore, of the use of any system of science based on the ignoring of any affection above that of the body, and of any motive except that of personal gain or advantage over one's neighbours? for such, reduced to first principles, is necessarily the ethics of evolution and the survival of the strongest.

Again, the faculty of thinking rationally is not of man, but of God in man, and hence the common tendency of all sound reason to acknowledge that there is a God, and that God is one. By means of this God-given faculty a man's mind thinks in the very light of heaven or of spiritual truth, and even while he is unaware he draws the common tendency of his thoughts from this inner spiritual intuition, which is a universal one, that there is a God, and that He is one ; and if a man twists or inverts the lower or sensuous plane of the mind so that it shall deny God or exclude such a being from His universe, he does it in violation of a normal and healthy reason. The soul's question has always been the question of cause and, behind that, of motive : how comes the world to be as it is, and why? These are the very questions that science, unaided by revelation, has never and can never answer ; and yet the very science that denies the possibility of a cause being known or revealed, and that contents itself with repeating the truism that "things are

what they are, and because they are"—even this aspires to be an educator of the human mind. Can the reason of man be cultivated by contemplating in nature a law so preposterous that it came into being only after the things evolved by means of it ; or a reason and an intelligence which exists only as the late outcoming of things and forces neither rational nor intelligent, but merely mechanical and material ? Says Swedenborg :—" Effects teach nothing but effects, and, when considered alone, do not explain a single cause ; but causes explain effects, and to know effects from causes is to be wise, while to inquire into causes from effects is not to be wise, since those fallacies present themselves which the examiner calls causes, and this is confounding wisdom." (See *D. L. W.*, 119.) What shall we say as to the capacity to make men wise—of that science which not only " considers effects alone," but declares it to be folly and nonsense for men to seek to know any cause above the plane of these effects ?

But how, finally, are causes to be known, and from causes a true or rational knowledge of effects to be had ? Holding securely on to the precious stones or atoms of natural knowledge which the investigations of modern science are bringing in, rejecting the spurious and the counterfeits and not pretending to make bread of them, but regarding them meanwhile only as so much elementary material out of which genuine uses can be built up, not for body only, but for thinking mind and for the soul, how are we to classify, arrange, and apply this scientific material to real human education, or the development of the soul into heavenly living, which is its destiny ? How, let me repeat it, are we to know causes, and thus get wisdom out of our science ?

Swedenborg says in *D. L. W.*, No. 186, "Without a knowledge of both continuous and discrete degrees, nothing of cause can be truly known. We shall therefore treat of them (the discrete degrees); for the end of this treatise is that causes may be discovered and effects seen from them, and that thereby the darkness in which the man of the Church is involved with respect to God and the Lord, and in general with respect to Divine things, which are called spiritual, may be dispelled."

The rightful connection of the Church with science will consist, therefore, in this, the ability of its theology to utilize rather than reject the vast accumulation of scientific facts, to employ them for the development of the sound reason of man and the promotion of human uses and of spiritual life. The theology of a true Church will utilize science, and make it subserve the rational and spiritual mind—1. By its revelation of the being and true nature of God and of His providence, in uncovering the spiritual or internal sense of the sacred Scriptures, and thus revealing anew the old revelation. 2. By its doctrine of the three discrete degrees, showing the logical and necessary relation between God, spirit, and matter, and their procession as the universal end, cause, and effect. 3. By its restored science of correspondence, by which the relation of the three discrete degrees to each other is known, and accordingly the relation of soul to body, of the spiritual world to the natural, and of the spiritual or internal sense to the letter or parable of Holy Scripture. By these means a true Church may make the sciences not merely subserve an industrial but also an educational and a religious use. This, be it repeated, no science can do

which cannot intelligently acknowledge God and read in nature the revelation of God. The human soul cannot be educated by a science whose object is to confirm it in favour of nature and against God. Man is not developed by being made to go again on all fours. To look downward and backward is not the way to train a child to hold his head erect and his eyes open. Man cannot be lifted by any weight of moral habit which is weaker than himself, and such must always be the morality of the past or lower orders of being as compared with the present; and this gradually developing morality of the past and the lower orders of being is all that evolution has to give us as a standard; instead of "a just and good" which we are to love, "because it is just and good," we have only the knowledge that certain material or bodily forces are stronger in us than others, and will have sway because they must, with no more virtue thereby than water is virtuous in running down hill. Evolution can at most say to us, "Look behind you, and behold in yourselves the highest outcome of atom and slime and tadpole and ape!" It cannot bid us look forward and upward, for there is nothing beyond what is thus far developed, and what is behind us is only beneath us—if, indeed, we can speak of degrees of moral elevation amid purely mechanical activities.

Religion, on the contrary, bids us in clear and certain tones look upward and forward. It reveals to us the Word or the eternal *Logos* or wisdom of creation, which in the beginning was with God and was God, which is the source of humanity, and therefore the legitimate aspiration of humanity; the source of man, and the legitimate object of his adoration; the source of its highest love,

and therefore the object of it. "Be ye perfect" is its bidding, "not as this ascidian, or the oyster or the slime is perfect," but rather, "Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect!"

This being the mission of the Church in relation to science, what is the duty of the Christian believer, and how may he perform his duty? Certainly not by sitting still and holding up his hands in blank horror at the way the world plunges onward in its ever darkening course of infidelity and denial. He must lend his sympathy and his help; first, in drawing a broad line of division between the two classes of scientists of to-day, the class who investigate nature for the purpose of finding God there, and the class who investigate nature for the purpose of proving that God is not there. This is no arbitrary, fanciful judgment he will have to form; he will take men at their word. The facts they bring forward are to-day almost universally labelled by their discoverers, for God or against God. Having drawn this dividing line, he will, as regards the latter class, accept such facts furnished by them as *are* facts, but he will reject *in toto* the conclusions they draw from them; he will reject them as conclusions which in the very nature of things must be untrue, unsafe, and unhealthy; and he will not only refuse to these, their bold advocates, the worship which has become, at this day, the fashionable idolatry of the highest ranks of so-called Christian society, but he must be willing to declare and exhibit his contempt and his abhorrence of them even at the risk of being called superstitious, blind, bigoted, illiberal, and unprogressive.

On the other hand, every attempt made to interpret

nature's facts in favour of God, Providence, a spiritual world, and immortality, he is to gladly welcome and encourage, from whatever source it comes. Here, as in the case of atheistic science, he will be careful to distinguish real from spurious facts, but he will regard that science as alone rational, which, besides accumulating the new materials of facts, statistics, details, records, so puts these together that they may be vessels in which spiritual truth can find shape and be visible to men, and by which the reason can ever be more and more confirmed in a belief in a rational Creator.

Finally, shall the Church stop here with only commenting on the researches and reflections of others? Ought she not actively and aggressively to enter the field of scientific research and scientific discussion by bringing to the notice of leading investigators and writers in every possible way the principles of her theology as bearing directly upon these themes? Ought she not to hold up to the abhorrence and rejection of her young minds the very philosophy that is taught in our most popular and wealthy colleges; and in sending her young men to these institutions to be educated, ought she not plainly to tell them with what purpose she sends them, namely, that they may collect and preserve a good supply of husks, but cast the meat away as corrupt and poisonous? Better than all, should she not dare to establish schools of her own, where the truth need not be spoken in whispers, and where the substance with the form, the meat with the shell, may be given, and men educated with the prospect of eternity and of heaven before them, and not of the grave and only another evolution of its dust and its motions?

**THE PERSONALITY OF DEITY  
A LOGICAL NECESSITY.**



## THE PERSONALITY OF DEITY A LOGICAL NECESSITY.

THE most interesting phase of the present revival of metaphysics is the new attitude which reason is assuming in relation to religion and revealed truth. From the time of the introduction of the Aristotelian Logic into the theology of the Schoolmen, and especially after the new impetus to free research imparted by the Renaissance, the intellect of Christendom grew restive and rebellious under the constraint of dogma, until in the last century, in the influences that led to such results, religious and political, as were exhibited in the French Revolution—the reason, which had at first been trained to draw in harness with the authoritative teaching of the Church, at last broke loose from fastening and rein alike, and plunged onward unchecked and unguided except by its own self-imposed limitations. That the world ere long stood aghast at the awful spectacle of religion and the Church not only ignored but trampled on in the name of liberty and rationality, is not to be wondered at, and that therefore Voltaire declared that, “If there were no God, the reason would be compelled to make one;” and that the French Revolutionists solemnly decreed the restoration of religion to the altars desecrated but shortly before in the name of reason, may be regarded as hardly more than the economical and political need of the hour. The Christian

apologists of that day or of the period that immediately followed built, it is true, upon a basis of reason only, and addressed themselves supposably to minds as devoid of faith as if Christian revelation had never been. But we feel, in reading, as if this were again an attempt to make the reason conform to a great moral necessity, rather than the voluntary seeking of reason itself for the proper gratification of its own longings, a poise where it should finally and freely rest in its unhindered flight.

If its strivings in the past had been to free itself from the fetters of dogma, that struggle was now over. The age of ecclesiastical domination of the intellect was past. What would the free untrammelled reason of a people trained in fourteen centuries of Christian doctrine and discipline do of its own accord when the doctrine and the discipline are now alike removed, and the age of spiritual and rational manhood with its accompanying liberty has been entered upon? As we have just said, the attempt on the part of reason to wear again, in the arguments of Butler and Paley, the humble garb of a menial serving the needs of society in keeping the world from moral shipwreck, while commendable enough as good behaviour, was not the free ultimation of the instincts of developed manhood felt within. The period of licence, of utter negation, of chaos, had not been endured for any trivial end. If the reason had of its accord plunged forward even into that world where it should hear uttered the words, "There is no God," it was to the end that it should even as freely turn back and seek, if not the old world it had left, then at least a "new heaven and a new earth" wherein the former things shall have passed away and all things are made new. It is here, in this voluntary

search for God, exhibited in the more enlightened philosophy of our day, that we find a wholly new meaning and importance attaching to contemporary metaphysics. Far from fleeing from an authoritative religion, we behold the minds of men absorbed everywhere in an inquiry in which no object is more earnestly sought than a God for the reason to acknowledge and to adore, if not the God of dogma, yet none the less a God which shall be something more than a *Deus ex machina*, something better and higher than any idol of man's making, even though it be the creation of the reason itself.

It is just here that we find a deep significance in Mr. Fiske's most interesting essay.<sup>1</sup> After a careful survey of the history of religious ideas from the standpoint of the evolutionist, our author arrives at the problem of God as it is met by the thoughts of our own time. Agnosticism he rejects as "the impossible alternative." After arriving at that most sensible and simple of all truths, that "in the deepest sense all that we really know is mind," Mr. Fiske continues:

"We are bound to conceive of the Eternal Reality *in terms of the only reality that we know*, or else refrain from conceiving it under any form whatever. *But the latter alternative is impossible.* We might as well try to escape from the air in which we breathe as to expel from consciousness the Power which is manifested throughout what we call the material universe. But the only conclusion we can consistently hold is that this is the very *same power which in ourselves wells up under the form of consciousness.*"

In knowing ourselves as thinking and willing beings, therefore, we in a manner, at least, know God the one great reality. In knowing ourselves as moral beings we

<sup>1</sup> *On the Idea of God.* Houghton, Mifflin, & Co., Boston.

might as confidently go on and say we know God as the great moral reality, as the Good. This is indeed but the putting of Descartes' beautiful argument in a new form. It is like saying : I know myself most surely as a thinking being ; the *esse* that thinks is the most real *esse* : but God is the most real *Esse*, and therefore God is a thinking being, and as such is the most certain object of knowledge that man possesses.

It is clear that after this admission Mr. Fiske must be moderate in his criticism of anthropomorphism. Indeed he is so to such an extent, that on the same page he seems to reject and accept this element in forming the idea of God. The anthropomorphism, otherwise called the argument from design which is found in Sokrates, Paley, and Sir Charles Bell, he seems to regard as outgrown or rendered worthless by the results of the Darwinian theory. "The knell of anthropomorphic or Augustinian theism is already sounded." And yet in the very next paragraph he says :

"To every form of theism an anthropomorphic element is indispensable. . . . The total elimination of anthropomorphism from the idea of God abolishes the idea itself."

Most surely, if that idea is the idea of power or of being which "wells up in ourselves under the form of consciousness." It would have been better, it seems to us, had Mr. Fiske not even affected, if we may use the term, the evolutionists' dislike of anthropomorphism, but had frankly and consistently held to this as the most substantial element in our purely rational conception of Deity. For in reality the argument by which Mr. Fiske arrives at his idea of the "living God" is far more

anthropomorphic than he himself seems to be aware. Even if we reject the comparatively short-sighted argument of Paley, and substitute for it that which is presented by the magnificent drama of evolution itself, what is it that constructs the argument, after all, but the reason, and what is the reason itself but the distinctly human outcome—the last and highest form of being reached in the wonderful progress of evolution?

"The glorious consummation toward which organic evolution is tending is the production of the highest and most perfect psychical life." According to this progress the idea of God has advanced, as we understand Mr. Fiske, and consequently the idea is wholly the outgrowth of the psychical evolution: it is the creature of reason; it is man-produced, and therefore must necessarily be man-like. It is anthropomorphism fashioned after the man of advanced psychical development, instead of after the savage, but it is none the less anthropomorphism.

And in this lofty conception we find the strength and at the same time the fatal weakness of the position assumed by the writer at the conclusion of this essay. The soul has indeed cried out not only for God—in the old theistic or mechanical sense, but for the "living God"—and in this idea, the creature of the psychical evolution, Mr. Fiske would fain find Him. By rejecting the old anthropomorphism which he better designates as Augustinian theism, he means to reject the old notion of God as of a being that exists out of and apart from nature, and he would substitute therefore the far truer and more helpful one of the immanence of the Divine in all the planes of natural being, such that the laws of nature are verily the laws of God, and the evolution of nature is naught else

than the evolution of the Divine Love and Wisdom, which are the essentials of Deity, upon the plane of uses, material, moral, and spiritual. Unquestionably this doctrine of the Immanence of God in nature is revolutionary, and one that forms an epoch in theology as truly as in science, provided we mean by "God" something which is indeed supernatural, that is, spiritual. It is in this recognition alone that that reconciliation will ever be found between science and religion which, according to Mr. Fiske, "will be one of the greatest benefits ever conferred upon the human race."

But it requires but little logical insight to see that the assertion of the Immanence of God in nature is a step in the process which transforms Deity into a subjective idea, and as such leaves it exposed to the most fatal objections which have assailed anthropomorphism in any form. If God is but the creature of human reason, He can never be made more adorable by all the refinements or adornments which psychical analysis can lend. The idol remains an idol, whether it be the rude fetich of the savage or the latest evolved psychical conception, if this be all; with this fatal difference, that the savage may from the bluntness of his religious perceptions be brought to attribute something of a supernatural and truly Divine power to his tinsel-decked image of wood, while the highly developed intellect will feel an inevitable aversion to anything like a devout or religious attitude toward that which it is conscious of having evolved out of its own reason alone. In Mr. Fiske's argument reason seems to have found its God, only to become confused and powerless at the vision at last attained. While seeming to sympathize all along with the evolutionists in rejecting anthropomorphism, his

God at last attained is in a deep and true sense the most anthropomorphic, the most human of all, and so only confounds at last the mind all ready to adore with the terrible and soul-sickening question — “Can this, thy creature, be God after all ?”

Where then shall we find in theology the answer to that cry, which is the cry of religion, for the “living God”? Mr. Fiske has taken a great step in making God again a conception subjective to man and immanent in nature. But the subjective alone is not sufficient to answer the real demand of either reason or the religious instinct, and probably, although he does not say so in words, no one is better aware of this than Mr. Fiske himself. We will not suppose our author to be guilty of that absurd manner of reasoning exhibited by some recent scientists who, after having evolved reason itself and moral instinct out of senseless matter and purposeless force, find no difficulty in talking quite as reverently as any, when charged with atheism, about the infinite wisdom of a creator who could have *foreseen* and *provided for* such an evolution !

Granting that the God whom reason recognises must be the author of that reason, and hence that *Something more* than matter and force, which was before all, and has been secretly working in all, creation ; nay, granting further that only on the assumption that reason is in a sense a Divine instinct in man, dare we assume that its conclusions have any universal and lasting validity, still we cannot place our limitation here and say, “In so far and so far only is the God of reason anthropomorphic, or vested with human properties as that we may attribute to His being consciousness and rationality.” The conception of God begun on this line of argument will not stop short of the

"full measure of a man, that is, of an angel." Not only must that Being who is the author of the law, the order, and the evolution of nature be a being of Love and of Wisdom, but He must be subject to the requirements of His own Divine attributes. The God who from love and by wisdom has become the creator of rational beings becomes thereby the Father of men: and the Father of men may with as rigid a necessity be asserted to love them and to desire their love in return as the former of the human reason may be declared to be an object cognizable to the reason.

With this postulate admitted, the solution of the difficulty which was caused by our fear of anthropomorphism is at once dispelled, and by Him who foresaw the difficulty from the beginning, and who put it into the mouth of His prophet to say, "Can man by searching find out God?" The Father of the world is not content that His children should go on blindly groping after Him, and at best, after countless ages, only find Him as a fiction of their imagination or the cold deduction of their reason. The Father of love will reveal Himself to those of His creatures who alone are endowed with the power of knowing Him and of reciprocating His love.

*Revelation is therefore necessary if we are to conceive of God reasonably;* for that God should create men with faculties for believing in, loving, and adoring their Creator, and yet should not reveal Himself to them, is a position not consistent with reason. What the nature of that revelation is it is not important here to inquire; only it is not subjective in the sense of being merely the voice of man's rational intuitions; rather is it the objective presentation of Deity corresponding to these intuitions,

the answer to the demand of the reason for a God not of its own making, the response of the Creator to that cry of the religious nature of man which only the "living God" can satisfy. Revelation lifts the idea of God out of its powerless subjectivity, and gives to man a God that speaks to him from without. It is the gracious answer of Divine goodness made alike to the first and crudest as it will be to the last and highest cravings of human nature. Without it the idea of God is incomplete and inconsistent with itself, and therefore fails to satisfy either the religious or the rational instinct. It is the mightiest of all evidences of the Divine indwelling in the world, for it alone brings God from the isolation and awful remoteness of Infinity down into the close contact with the souls that He has made. What though the form of His revealings be crude, gross, and so adapted to the coarse conceptions of men? it is none the less revelation, nay, it is the more powerful and real by virtue of this adaptation. "Behold, He cometh with clouds!" has been the cry of the prophet, but none the less significant and true is the declaration of the Gospel that "Ye shall see the Son of man coming *in the clouds* of heaven with power and great glory." The clouds of revelation may have belonged to the past, while the power and great glory are still in store for the present and future. But so essential is revelation to our attaining to an idea of God as an objective reality, that in the pages of Scripture the idea of Deity as Being is almost identified with the idea of Deity as Self-revealing. For "in the Beginning was the WORD, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." The only step that remains for metaphysics to take in order to reach its goal in a final and satisfying idea of God, is that which ascends

170 *THE PERSONALITY OF DEITY, ETC.*

from the comprehension of God as Being to God as the WORD or as Self-revealing. For it is pertinent to this discussion, even though it be Revelation that puts the words upon our lips, to say : "No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath brought Him forth to view." "And the WORD was made flesh, and dwelt among us: and we beheld His Glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

# **A DRAMA OF CREATION.**



## A DRAMA OF CREATION.

BEING A STUDY OF SWEDENBORG'S WORK ENTITLED "DE  
CULTU ET AMORE DEI."<sup>1</sup>

THE several stages of Swedenborg's writings appear distinct according to very discrete or clearly determined divisions, and yet we find between them those remarkable transitional works covering in a peculiar manner the border lands of thought and study of which they respectively treat. Of these transitional works I think it will be found that none is so remarkable, under whatever aspect it is viewed, as the work before us. Like all of Swedenborg's maturer writings, it is marvellous in its retrospective embrace of principles before announced, and its intimations of deeper ones yet to be developed; but it occupies a place peculiarly its own, being written in a style unlike anything before or after it, and constituting in itself, even in the fragmentary form in which it was left by its author, one of the most perfect and complete conceptions, and in its scheme and treatment one of the most nearly approaching the sublime of all the creations of human imagination or prophetic inspiration. Indeed, studied in a merely poetic and literary light, one begins to find in the author of this work a man unfamiliar to his ken in all other studies of Swedenborg.

<sup>1</sup> *De Cultu et Amore Dei* [*On the Worship and Love of God*]. Edited by the Rev. Thomas Murray Gorman, M.A. Pp. 200. London : Kegan Paul, Trench, & Co. 1883.

Where else do we find a second Plato, speaking in the language and figures and sublime enthusiasm of the *Phædrus*, as here in the Fifth Canto or Day, where the evil principle in our nature is depicted under the character of the “Charioteer of the World,” who “directs human minds by his reins, and drives them like horses foaming at the mouth into such a variety of downward courses”?

Where else do we find a Milton, describing in purest and most noble figures the vernal beauty, glory, and order of our earth in creation’s morn, and the joy of all the heavenly powers at this completion of the Divine plan? Where else do we find the harmonies of those choirs of angels and archangels, faintly echoed by Goethe in the *Faust*, in the *Prologue in Heaven*,—wherein the heavenly essences and spheres in their wonderful gyrations and involutions celebrate in intensest joy the birth of the first-born, and afterward the marriage of the first human pair? How identical in sentiment the wrapt language of the philosopher, lost in adoration before the perfections of the Supreme Love and its completed ultimation in the creation of a human pair and the foundation of a celestial society, with the sublime hymn of the archangels as conceived in Goethe’s loftiest imagination :

#### RAPHAEL.

The sun-orb sings in emulation,  
'Mid brother spheres, his ancient round ;  
His path, predestined through creation,  
He ends with step of thunder sound.

The angels from his visage splendid  
Draw power whose measure none can say ;  
The lofty works, uncomprehended,  
Are bright as in the earliest day.

## GABRIEL.

And swift and swift beyond conceiving,  
The splendour of the world goes round,  
Day's Eden brightness still relieving  
The awful night's intense profound.

## MICHAEL.

The rival storms abroad are surging  
From sea to land, from land to sea ;  
A chain of deepest action forging  
Round all in wrathful energy.

Yet, Lord, Thy messengers are praising  
The gentle movement of Thy Day.

## THE THREE.

Though still by them uncomprehended,  
From these the angels draw their power ;  
And all Thy works, sublime and splendid,  
Are bright as in creation's hour !

*Faust; Taylor's Translation.*

Compare with this scene which Goethe seems to have gained in some border-land of the Infinite to which his poetic soul had access, the description given by Swedenborg of the festival in which the godlike essences or celestial images "celebrated the last day of creation and the first of the human race":

"They devised a new kind of sport called paradisiacal, never before sported in the heavens, but not by tripping and dancing, such as terrestrial nymphs adopt in their amusements, but such as celestial intelligences indulge in whilst they are desirous to return into a state of innocence, and, as it were, into infancy. For they so initiated it by revolutions and mutual influxes, as it were, into itself from things ultimate, that from innumerable sports they

formed one perpetual and continued ; which end was secured by such circular spheres and spiral windings, like so many labyrinths to our sight, but still more distinct in themselves, that not even one number in the rhythms gave an ambiguous harmony. For they insinuated themselves from the circumferences by continual circuitions and involutions toward the center, by a rapid and continual flexure, so that they all concentered themselves by measures mutually succeeding each other, and so united that there was not even one which did not see itself as it were concentered in the very center ; for thus by the advantage of the harmony and form alone, from being discrete they could unite together in one continual sport. . . . Commencing from this center, as it were a common one, because diffused equally among all, the crowning choir of celestial beings from more interior goals, and a more universal rotation, thus still more perfectly, began new orbs, which in like manner concentrated themselves, that they might again, from the former unity, continued distinctly into each and all, introduce themselves into a more intimate and thus prior concentration. . . . And so until they no longer emulated what is perpetual but what is infinite, and saw themselves so closely conjoined to the idea of super-celestial harmony, and, as it were, initiated into it, that they sensibly perceived that they were no longer many, but as one, and in the inmost principles of centers ; for, in like manner as they united themselves, they united also their minds and their minds' delights. They translated also the mind of our infant (the first-born of the human race) from the ultimate rotation in which he was constituted, toward inmost principles along with themselves, by these insinuations, and being thus united with it, they presented him conjointly as one and a divine spirit from unanimity itself to the SUPREME DEITY, who, being delighted with the end of His works both first and last, represented in him, hailed his coming with grace and favour ; then bursting forth under the influence of this divine honour from this inmost and most sacred of centers, they again extricated and unfolded themselves by similar circuits and concentrated orbs, but now rolling back in the same order toward the circumferences, and unfolding themselves from one again into several, they reposed the infant again in his ultimate circle." (No. 42.)

Where else in all our author's writings shall we find these clear-cut, statuesque pictures, worthy to have been taken entire from the pages of a Greek tragedy, like, for instance, that in which Swedenborg represents the Soul as descending from her celestial palace, or her "inmost principles," into the body of the first-begotten, in order to elevate him from his reptile and bestial state into the upright form in which he might walk with his eyes directed toward the starry heavens; and her meeting subsequently the beautiful forms which, as objects of vision, became introduced into the chambers of the mind?

"The Soul from the sanctuaries or centers of her Olympus, that she might continually meet those beautiful forms, which, like new guests, insinuated themselves through the doors and chambers of vision, attenuated by degrees her most splendid light, and girded herself with a less shining mantle, and at length descended to the lowest door-posts, clothed herself in a shadowy but still pellucid robe, adding also gems but crystalline. Thus she always compounded herself anew, even to the meeting of images which borrow their form from the rays of the solar light; which having seen, she received them with friendly kisses and embraces, under the very threshold, about the last step of her ladder; but these images, when they had returned the salutation, instantly felt themselves reformed, so that when they looked at each other, they could no longer distinguish themselves as sisters. For that goddess or queen by her kiss and embrace infused life into them from her own life, so that they no longer appeared as images, but as ideas." (No. 47.)

And what classic purity of form and restrained pathos we find in this picture of the Soul resigning her conscious or voluntary powers to the intelligent Mind, while she withdraws again into her sanctuary or heavenly Olympus, leaving for ever the body and the mental powers which she has brought forth, the conscious usurpers of her place—a sacrifice as necessary to her own divinely-created end

or purpose as it is to their or man's happiness as a free rational being ! Was ever philosophy clothed in so translucent and heavenly a garb before or since ?

" At length this mother seemed to herself most happy, having called together her daughters, and at the same time out of the chambers of the court, their slaves and servants, who arranged themselves about the wisdoms, now their mistresses, into the form of a most beautiful crown ; and whilst with acute discernment she fixed her attention upon all and each of them in the assembly, she thus began to speak :—

" 'My most beloved daughters ! The time is at hand that we must depart, you to your sacred offices, I into my sanctuary ; remember, daughters, that I am your parent, and that the life which you derive from mine is so devoted to you by essential love, that by mind I am in you. Thus, although we part, ye still can do nothing but under my auspices ; the light from which ye view ends is from mine, because by me ; yours is only to be circumspect, and to arrange means that our ends may exist in effect and use. . . . Again and again, I pray and beseech you not to look up to or covet any other end than the best, that is the love of the Supreme, breathed into you with life and with milk, for He is the End of Ends, the First of the Last and the Last of the First. From Him are all things, because He is the All of All. . . . On account of His and your love I abdicate my kingdom, and I deliver up the key to your care, for my great concern is only about you. Behold me, therefore, no longer as your lawful mother, but as your companion and your minister. But I entreat you, my most beloved and most dear, with the most earnest prayer, remember my salvation, whilst you remember your own, for my salvation and my happiness are at your disposal since I have delivered up to you my soul.'

" At these words tears flowed from both the parties ; they sunk into each other's bosoms and remained in close embrace. . . . But it was time for them mutually to recede, and for the intelligences to take into their hands the reins committed to them. The sun also began to appear with his upper border to the east, and the sensations began to awake."

Where else, save perhaps in our author's own *Memorabilia*, shall we find these great shadows, cast by a second Dante, as it were, walking along the infernal abyss, such as are given in the Fifth Canto, where is described the perverted natural man, or the prince of this world in rebellion against the order of heaven and of the pristine creation? The loves of his mind, when reflected in the mirrors held before them by the sacred wisdoms, appear instantly as snakes, twining and hissing around their heads and pouring poison into the veins of their bodies through every pore by biting; and they seem to themselves to be so many Gorgon faces; being terrified they desire to run away, but from the motion of their bodies those infernal snake-like locks beat their bosoms and faces; hence they become as it were frozen, and their blood ceases to flow.

"Then said the wisdoms, 'Behold now your loves and your hates; believe us that the spiritual life which awaits you will be like this; . . . in proportion to the number of snakes is that of the fires and of the furies of your spiritual life. . . . Begone, now, O beautiful flowers! together with that venom so sweet which ye concealed in your fibres!'"

And finally, to conclude this hunting for parallels, where shall we find in any converse of the great Italian with the heaven-wrapt Beatrice, a more beautiful vision of the soul's grateful and adoring rest in the protective sphere of divine love, than in the passage where Swedenborg describes the first-begotten as having listened to the story of the world being saved from destruction through the interposition of the Supreme love of the Only-Begotten:

"On hearing these things, our first-begotten, being at first astonished at the great danger to which the universe was exposed,

was, as it were, struck dumb ; but presently being melted by so stupendous an instance of love, a secret delight was communicated to the inmost principles of his being ; and therefore sinking into the bosom of his wisdom he remained there a long time dissolved in tears, being made thoroughly sensible in himself of what true love is, and what is its essence ; but after that he had fed with tears of joy on that very tender affection bursting forth from love, reclining on his wisdom, he earnestly entreated her to retrace her footsteps a little to the point from whence she had digressed, and to explain to him in what manner a full opportunity might be given him of enjoying this his love. He said that now he had a perception of this truth, he had no other desire than that he might become not his own but His" (who thus had loved him). (No. 79.)

That as a literary production this work has a character all its own, one might be led to infer from the report of the author's own judgment of its merits in this respect, as given us in the words of Christian Johansen, who is stated in the *Documents Concerning Swedenborg*, Vol. ii. p. 710, to have interrogated Swedenborg himself as to the truthfulness of this the work before us. "It was certainly founded in truth, but somewhat of egotism had introduced itself into it, as he had made a playful use in it of the Latin language on account of his having been ridiculed for the simplicity of his Latin style in later years. For this reason he did not regard it as *equal* to his other works."

Leaving for the present the matter of its style, and returning to its contents as constituting a nexus between successive stages of Swedenborg development, we shall find of service in arriving at a true estimate of the work in this respect, the very able treatise on *Science on Philosophy*, Part III. in No. VI. of *Words for the New Church*.<sup>1</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> Philadelphia : Lippincott & Co., Publishers.

writer of this admirable paper gives us the very helpful classification of Swedenborg's works prior to his illumination—as those devoted to the study of the macrocosm and of the microcosm—or as we might also name them, those devoted to the objective and those devoted to the subjective world. Prior to 1734, or the production of the *Principia*, the author's attention was mainly given to the material or outer world; these works constitute the distinctively scientific stage of his writings: the animal kingdom as considered anatomically, physically, and philosophically, is a study of the world within, the "soul's kingdom;" and the *Principia*, treating as it does of the elementary world and that process of creation or of evolution from the first invisible element through the sun and the atmospheres to the earthly paradise, while it would seem at first glance to belong to the objective stage, yet really forms the transition from the macrocosmic to the microcosmic studies of our author. Of this we may be assured by his own assertion in the *Animal Kingdom*, Part III.:

"The sensations cannot be explored without examining the atmospheres, for the one subject is most intimately connected with the other." . . . "These things have been discussed in my Philosophic *Principia*, where the forms of the particles of each atmosphere are treated of and delineated. (1) These things were written for our present purpose [viz. the analysis of the mechanism of the eye]. (2) Now comes the application."

These few words throw a wonderful light on the whole tendency and method of the *Principia*, as, namely, being fundamental to the study of the organic and the spiritual or intelligent world. Consequently while in form dealing with the macrocosm, in purpose and end we see it all sub-

servient to the microcosm, the kingdom of the soul, or as forming that great highway to a knowledge of the soul itself, which was the avowed object of our author's search during his whole career as a philosopher.

A further classification of our author's writings, as analytic and synthetic, on which point we are also indebted for much valuable light to the writer in the *Words for the New Church* in the number above cited, leads us to the more immediate consideration of the relative position of the work which constitutes our present study.

Following the commonly accepted division of our author's writing into the three classes, the scientific, the philosophic, and the theological, or as they might be termed, the macrocosmic, the microcosmic, and those devoted to the science of the spiritual, we shall find, it is believed, this general law or order pervading the whole series, viz.: First, the analytic study, pursued in each division; then a synthetic summary or declaration of *a priori* principles, which while it sums up all the facts of the analytic study preceding, at the same time forms a transition and introduction into a new analytic study in the period next succeeding. Thus the scientific works, mainly analytic in form, are succeeded by the *Principia*, which work is entirely synthetic in method, and while in a measure based upon all the principles of elementary science preceding, itself affords a kind of *a priori* basis for the study of the soul and its kingdom, as pursued analytically in the treatises of the *Animal Kingdom*. The knowledge of the sensations and the whole science of the fibrous organization and of the cerebral formation and functions, would be wholly visionary and fanciful were it not for the wondrous

correspondence shown to exist between these interior operations of the soul through her organs, and the surrounding atmospheres as the media of impressions. Again, after the analytic researches in the *Animal Kingdom*, we approach the goal of our author's ambition, the knowledge of the Soul; and to our mind we find the real culmination of all our author's studies of the microcosm in the work *De Anima*,<sup>1</sup> entitled by Dr. Immanuel Tafel the *Seventh Part* of the *Animal Kingdom*. The body in all its great organs having been surveyed, the author proceeds now to the skin and touch, and the organs of the senses, and through these mounts to the imagination, to the sensory, thence to the intellectory [*intellectorium*], and finally to the Soul itself. This treatise *On the Soul* commences with the description of the simple fiber from which as a celestial form the whole body derives its structure, as in the *Principia* the universe is developed from the first simple or the natural point. While not analytic in form, like the *Economy*, the *Animal Kingdom*, and the work *On the Brain*, it is yet full of experimental illustrations, and rests entirely for its scientific basis on the elementary and atmospheric data of the *Principia*. We would classify the *De Anima*, therefore, with the analytic writings of the microcosmic stage, forming it is true the highest and most interior and subtle order of investigations of which natural philosophy is capable, but still ranking as a part of those inductive studies which

<sup>1</sup> *The Soul, or Rational Psychology.* By Emanuel Swedenborg. Translated from the Latin edition of 1849, and edited with notes and appendix, by Frank Sewall, A.M., 1887. Pp. 350. London: sold by James Speirs, 36 Bloomsbury Street, W.C.

our author pursued without the direct illumination of that spiritual light of angelic wisdom, which he afterward enjoyed.

The true *synthesis* of all this philosophical stage of writing we shall therefore not look for in either of the treatises on the Soul as such, but rather in the interesting and marvellous work before us at this time, *On the Worship and Love of God*. In this work every trace of the analytic method disappears. Here all is fresh, spontaneous creation, glowing and palpitating with the life and ardour of a new-born world, a paradise so intensely alive that we seem to feel its reality too sensibly to be fit for critically discussing it. The language is that of a description of realities, of a panorama of actual events, neither source nor authority nor explanation of any kind being given, and yet accompanying all these dramatic and animated scenes of life and action there runs a commentary, or glossary, showing the relation of all these natural figures and persons to the intricate and subtle structures and operations of the human body, especially of the finer sensory organs and the brain. That Swedenborg did not regard it as belonging to his analytic or strictly scientific studies, has been inferred from his statement in his diary, May 1st, 1744 : "Thenceforth speculation which has hitherto been *à posteriori* will change into *à priori*." Also in April of the same year he interprets a dream as illustrating the unwillingness he felt to abandon his philosophic for spiritual studies. In October he describes further in his private diary the conflict in his mind between the *Regnum Animale*, which he was just preparing for the press, and a new work of which he

received frequent intimations in his dreams. He writes under date of October 7, 1744: "I was further informed respecting my book upon the *Worship and Love of God*, which was said to be a Divine Book. I believe it was to contain something about spirits. My book on the infinite I thought treated of something similar; but I did not receive an answer to this suggestion."—*Documents Concerning Swedenborg*. Tafel. London. No. 209: 182.

October 10, he writes: "There was signified to me by a representation, that, on the day before, I was engaged with my work, which was entirely different from the other, and proceeded from an entirely different love, and I was in doubt whether the former should prevail." By further representations he "was confirmed to go on with his work." On October 27 he writes: "It was foretold that the twenty-seventh of October would come again, when I undertook the *Worship and Love of God*." By a further representation at the same time, he says: "By this is signified the whole of that work upon which I am now entering in God's name; in front, before me is the part on 'The Worship of God;' at the sides that treating on 'The Love; ' there is also signified by this representation that I must not take of the articles manufactured by others, . . . . but that I must use my own. May God lead me in the right way!"—*Documents*: 209: 203.

About this time, October 9, 1744, our author records a dream which is of more than ordinary significance considered in its relation to this transition-period in his philosophic career, when he was, as it were, to be stripped of all intellectual pride, and in the simplicity of a child to

be led as if by the spirit of God back into a paradise of primitive innocence and worship.

"This night," he says, "was the most delightful of all; since I saw the kingdom of Innocence. Below my feet I saw the most beautiful garden which could possibly be seen. On every tree in the garden there gradually appeared white roses. Afterward I came into a long room where beautiful white cups were standing, which were filled with milk and bread, and which looked so inviting that nothing could be imagined more so. I was in company with a lady, of whom I have no personal recollection. I then went back where a dear little innocent child came to me and told me that the lady had gone without taking leave. She begged me to buy her a book which she wished to take with her, but which she did not show me. I then awoke. Besides this, it seemed to me as if I entertained in a house or palace which stood apart, a large company of people who were my acquaintances. . . . This signifies that I was in the Kingdom of Innocence, treating the worldly-minded people there without seeing them. It means that either my work is not like theirs, although I treat them with it, or something else. The child was Innocence itself, and I wished that I might be in a kingdom where all is innocence. I regretted that on awakening I had to leave it. . . . On the next day, the 9th, my eyesight was so strong that I could read the Bible with the small print without the least difficulty."

The writer in the *Words for the New Church* thus alludes to the work before us :

"On entering upon his work Swedenborg turned his back upon his former analytic studies, and more in the style of a seer and

poet he described the creation of the universe, and of the first-born among men. In inspired, glowing terms, he descended upon the sojourn of the first-born in Paradise, detailing the gradual unfolding of his mind. Afterward he treated of the creation of woman, of the wooing of the first-born, and of their married life. All is filled with the fervent, exuberant life of first creation ; yet his rhapsody goes over ground which had been carefully surveyed and measured out by his rational thought. His flight is that of an eagle, but it is determined and directed by the principles and results at which he had arrived by his previous analytic studies."

William White, in his larger work on Swedenborg, after giving a graphic outline of the work, continues :

" 'Of course Swedenborg wrote all this confessedly as fiction,' says the reader. There is no sign that he did ; nay, my own conviction is that he believed every word of it as sincerely as he ever believed anything. . . . Many who will read with composure and admiration his account of the manufacture of the elements from Points of Force, and of Earth from Water, will start appalled at the notion that he was in earnest in describing the creation of Planets, Insects, Birds, Beasts, and Fishes, and above all, Adam and Eve ; but there is no reason why the intuition which could evolve the story of the former should hesitate about the latter."

Elsewhere the same author remarks :

"The structural affinity of this work, *The Worship and Love of God*, is closer to the *Principia* of 1734 than to the *Animal Kingdom* of 1744, though annotated with his later thought. In the *Principia*, Swedenborg worked out the creation as far as the Paradise, and in the *Worship and Love of God* he takes up the thread of his story, and tells us how plants and animals and Adam and Eve were made."

Dr. Beyer, in his letter to Nordensköld, in 1776 (*Documents*, vol. ii. p. 427), remarks :

"The work *De Cultu, etc.*, is not of importance in respect to theological doctrine ; but in respect to natural truths, it contains many beautiful and profound thoughts. On the subject of God and love and wisdom, on the Son, the person of Adam, the sources of life and imputation, he expressed himself quite differently after he had received instruction from the Lord : wherefore the above work is never cited in his other works."

Dr. Garth Wilkinson thus alludes to the work, in his biography of Swedenborg :

"The Worship and Love of God is a centering of all that he had previously elicited from his studies, and an attempt, moreover, to carry them into another field. As the title prepares the reader to expect, it is an end to his scientific search. He began from God, or the foundation of sciences ; the wisdom of creation was the desire and wisdom of his labours, and here he ended with his beginning, carrying God's harvest to God. Apparently he did not know that his literary life was closed, but stood among the sheaves, contemplating the tillage of future years in the old domain, although trembling nevertheless in the presence of an undisclosed event."

Here, while dwelling upon the judgments passed upon this work by others, we may refer again to its reputed estimate by Swedenborg himself, as related by Christian Johansen (see *Documents*, ii. 710),<sup>1</sup> and only in order to remark, that with all deference to so respectable an authority, we feel a strong inclination to reject the whole statement, as one bearing intrinsic evidence of having no foundation in fact, or else of having been vastly changed from its original form. Swedenborg was not the man, least of all at this time of life, to be driven by the ridicule of others into the adoption of a new style of writing. The style itself is indeed elegant and ornate, such as would entitle the work to be placed by the side

<sup>1</sup> Quoted on page 180.

of any of our greatest modern epics, including the *Commedia* and the *Paradise Lost*, but it is, at the same time, the one alone adequate and perfectly adapted to the matter in hand. Moreover, Swedenborg was not, so far as we are aware, in the habit of passing judgment on his own writings, asserting that one was not the equal of others, etc.

The relation which the work before us sustains to the *Principia*, as indicated by White in the passage above quoted, gives us perhaps the best clue to its true position in the series of the author's writings. It is not only like the *Principia*, namely, synthetic in form, consisting of a declaration of principles and the narration of the creation of the world in its process, rather than an investigation of facts furnished by others, but it continues in an orderly series the great narrative which the *Principia* had begun. The *Principia* conducts the reader from the first natural point, the beginning of the finite world or nature, to the formation of the earth, and concludes with a chapter devoted to the "Paradise formed upon our earth, and the First Man." Says Swedenborg :

" We have explained how the earth's gyrations were at the commencement more rapid, then in process of time slower, till, on arriving at the orbit it now annually describes, it reached its utmost limit of slowness. Here we left it, surrounded with water without a shore. Not, however, to leave it to the lawless fury of a flood, we here resume the subject, and explain in a few words in what manner shores were now added ; that is to say how it was that dry land was acquired, how the waters superinduced upon themselves a crust, which not only coerced them within given limits, and kept them within an enclosure, but also how all that we now find in the vegetable and mineral worlds was enabled to enter into the crust ; how heaven also not only deposited its seeds in this crust, but also gave them germination and expansion."

Thence he goes on to describe the formation of the crust, the origin of the mineral and vegetable kingdoms, and the perpetual spring as the effectual means by which the germination of things could be promoted: "And when, therefore, this globe had been enriched in its various vegetable productions, and animals of all kinds had come into being, then was the first man introduced into Paradise, having been created into all the harmony of the visible world."

After writing these words an interval of ten years follows before we find our author again taking up the story of creation, now in the form of the sublime drama described in the seven days or scenes of the "Worship and Love of God." What does this interval of time signify in connection with this work, thus interrupted and resumed? We have seen that the *Principia* was of the nature of a synthesis of the principles of natural or elementary philosophy, serving at once as a conclusion of the macrocosmic studies and an introduction to the microcosmic. The study of the microcosm is pursued in the study of the soul in her kingdom, the body—the human form, as the form of the Divine economy of uses, or of a heavenly society. This study is strictly analytic, consisting of citations from authorities and inductions therefrom. The whole, nevertheless, rests for its real basis in the doctrines of the *Principia*, which have been synthetically declared at the beginning of this period. The inner world, or microcosm, which forms the object of the researches in the Animal Kingdom, is the world of man considered anatomically, physically, and philosophically; it is the human form as the great model form of use, or Divine society but studied in its natural formations as

exhibited in the natural body, and not as the form of the spiritual man. There is still another world, neither great nor little, a world having naught of space in it, which is still to be explored—the world not of mechanical nature or geometry, nor of the soul's operations in the body, but the world of spirit.

As the analytic studies of the macrocosm led to the *Principia* as their synthesis and transition to the next higher stage, so shall we not now say the analytic studies of the microcosm or the animal kingdom lead to the work on the *Worship and Love of God* as their true synthesis and their bridge to the concluding stage of our author's career—that of the seer of spiritual truths. The history of creation, dropped in the *Principia* at the completion of the elementary or universal world, is taken up again now in this *à priori* description of the origin of organic living forms, of man or the human soul, and of the beginning of human society. The birth of the first man and the education of the first human soul could not be treated on the basis of the *Principia* or elementary science only; it needed the science of the *whole animal economy*, and of the adaptation of the soul to its surroundings, the science of the atmospheres, of forms, series, and modifications, of the senses, and the sensations. These sciences form the solid analytic basis on which the account of the birth, the education, and the marriage of the first-begotten are built up. These materials at hand, the story of the creation can now be completed; the glimpse of Paradise, barely gained at the close of the *Principia*, now broadens into a wide, lovely view of our virgin earth, in its luxuriance and perfection, and of man in his primitive innocence, integrity, and beauty.

Regarding the work, then, as a continuation of the *Principia* in a higher plane, inasmuch as it gives us the further stages or development of creation, let us glance very briefly at the wonderful scenes now unrolled before us in these glowing pages.

The work is divided by its author into three parts:— Part First describes, according to the author's title, “*The Birth of the Earth, of Paradise, and of Living Creatures; also the Nativity, Infancy, and the Love of the First-begotten or Adam.*” The Second Part treats of “*The Marriage of the First-begotten or Adam, and in connection with it, of the Soul, the Intellectual Mind, the State of Integrity, and the Image of God.*” The Third Part, as yet untranslated but accessible in the Latin, partly in print, partly in MS., in vol. vii. of the photo-lithographed MSS. of Swedenborg, is headed “*De Vita Conjugii paris primogeniti*”—“*The Life of the Marriage of the First-born Pair.*” Notwithstanding these divisions, however, the work forms a single consecutive narration, embracing the creative acts of seven successive days, that of the last, with a more than artistic significance to our minds, being left incomplete. These several parts, or chapters, may not unfitly be termed successive Cantos of a great poem or the acts of a sublime Drama.

The First section treats of the Birth of the Earth, the Orbita and Gyrationa of the Planets, the complex of universes called the Firmament, the series of Forms, angular, circular, vortical, and the perpetually vortical or celestial Forms. The great Egg of the Universe, the sun, primitively overspread with effluvias, which ultimately formed a crust or shell, is represented as bursting with the sun's own heat or energy, and thus hatching as a

numerous offspring all the globes of the universe, which look to him as their parent. Hence the planets and their satellites. And at length the earth, smooth, clean, and round, whirling in its comparatively narrow orbit, now represented a kind of new egg, laden with many small eggs collected at its surface, or small seeds of its future triple kingdom, viz. the mineral, vegetable, and animal. The seeds or beginnings lay as yet unseparated in their rudiments, one folded up in another, viz. the vegetable kingdom in the mineral kingdom, which was the matrix ; and in the vegetable kingdom which was to serve as a nurse, or nourisher, the animal kingdom ; for each afterward was to come forth distinctly from its coverings. Thus the present contained the past, and what was to come lay concealed in each, for one thing involved another in a continual series ; by which means the earth, from its continued auspices, was perpetually in a kind of birth, and, as it were, in the view of something to follow, whilst it was in the end, and, as it were, forgetfulness of what was gone before ; and according to progression in its orbit receding from the center, it involved continually new powers, by virtue of which were successively unfolded uses. (No. 15.)

The Second section treats of Paradise "when the earth still naked and unadorned advanced towards its maturity, and, like a young damsel as yet unmarried, hastened to the flower of its first age."

"The quickly revolving days and nights, the even temperature, the blending of eve and day in all things relating to space and time, both greatest and least, conspired to one end, that our globe might enter into the flower of its age, or perpetual spring."

Then follows the account of the origin of Living

creatures, their birth from eggs produced respectively by the *shrubs* or little leaves, which produced the *worms* and *insects*; the “violet beds and groves of Paradise,” from which are produced the *birds*; the viviparous forests which produced the *quadrupeds*, or larger and more destructive beasts, only safely after the lower shrubs have brought forth their vital progeny! (See Nos. 25, 26, 27.)

“The vegetables, themselves, in imitation of their great mother, were primitively, as it were, mere seminaries and ovaries, but which produced not only after their own kind, but also after a kind different from themselves; for one thing lay so folded up in another that the other did not come forth till all things were ready prepared which might serve for the exercises and necessities of its life. From the series itself of production, it may be manifest whence came the soul of brutes, which are said to have been ingenerated in the seeds of the vegetable kingdom; for as all the seeds of vegetables arose from the conjunction of the active powers of nature with the inert powers of the earth, through the medium of the radiation of the sun of the world, so their seeds, which are animated, arose from that form or spiritual essence, infused into the forms or active powers of nature through the medium of the radiation of the sun of life, which is spiritual and living; wherefore these lives went forth in the same subordinate series as those powers of nature themselves which constituted the atmospheres, consequently the same as the seeds of the vegetables themselves, from which they finally were hatched. And since that life from its fountain breathes nothing but uses, and nature is nothing but an effort for the sake of uses, it is evident that it was so foreseen and provided, that uses themselves as effects might unfold themselves; he is totally blind and in the grossest darkness who in these things does not discover what is DIVINE.”

The Third scene is that of the Birth of the First-begotten, or Adam, where the novel representation is introduced of man as being produced from an egg, borne on a noble tree called the Tree of Life, which grew in a

beautiful grove, described as a “Paradise within a Paradise.” The wonderful account is as follows :—

“ In the midst of this Paradise within a Paradise was again a fruit tree which bore a small egg, the most precious of all others, in which, as in a jewel, nature concealed herself with her highest powers and stores, to become the initiaments of the most consummate body ; this fruit tree was from hence called the **TREE OF LIFE**.

“ But this little egg was not yet fecundated, only nature collected into it as into a sort of sacred little ark, her most distinguished treasures and valuables, and provided it with such noble furniture as a bride prepares for her bed-chamber when she expects the coming of the bridegroom and the offerings of a new covenant. When nature had thus in every respect completed her work, and collected as it were her circumferences into this egg, as a center, then the Supreme mind came to meet her ; and from itself as the sun of essential life, with concentrated rays, conceived the super-essential form, or soul, which was life, and capable of containing what is infinite by the Self-infinite. This form or Soul the Supreme mind infused into this treasure or little egg. This was the first happy token of connubial intercourse of spiritual essence with the supreme aura of nature, for the purpose that the fluent orb of causes, conceived by the Infinite in the grand egg of the world, and brought down to this least egg, might be completed within nature, but afterward, by connection with the Infinite, might be rendered infinite ; and that by such conjunction a terrestrial court might be annexed to a celestial palace.” . . .

“ The Tree of Life itself unfolded its branches, which bare this golden and vital apple, into a soft and easy womb, and covering it with a thin bark and soft leaves, drew off the nourishing juice from the neighbouring leaves, and consulted only its life ; the neighbouring trees also contributed their juice by instilling it into the roots of this tree, which crowned the center of the grove, rejoicing that they were allowed from their vegetable store to impart something of life to the same.”

“ Nor was nature alone at hand and urgent to supply all her aids, but Heaven was also favourable in its presence ; for its inhabitants or spiritual minds were let down for this purpose, that

they might second and direct all the offices of nature ; also that they might drive away whatsoever should infest this sacred grove ; for instantly when any fierce animals overleaped the boundary assigned them, being struck with a sudden terror, they fled far away into their forests, or, with a faltering step, fell down on their knees to worship their Prince and Lord ; part also kept watch and guarded the passage itself at a distance. For pure spiritual essences, by virtue of the power and force alone which issue from them, so affect and astonish minds enslaved to nature, that these ignorantly and impotently forget themselves and adopt habits even contrary to their own nature.

"All things were now prepared. The parturient branch, according to the times of gestation, declining' itself by degrees toward the ground, at length deposited its burden commodiously on the couch underneath. The celestial living beings, clothed with a bright cloud, were also at hand, and found that nothing was neglected, but that all things were prepared obsequiously by nature in conformaty to their provisions. Hence, when the many months were completed, at that time so many years, the foetus, perfectly conscious of what was decreed, himself broke through the bands and bars of his inclosure, and raised himself by his own exertions into this world and its Paradise, desired from the first moments of his life ; and immediately drew in with his nostrils and breath the air, which he saluted with a slight kiss, and which pressed in by its force as a new vital guest or spirit, for which interior chambers were now provided ; and by its aid opening a field for exertions he excited to their respective offices all the powers of his body, which were now in the ability to exert themselves. The choicest flowers encompassing this bed-chamber now exhaled their odours from their winding ducts, that by these infused into the attracted air, they might also penetrate and exhilarate all the blood of the infant flowing from the heart and now meeting the air, with rich and delicious gifts. Whatsoever was in the kingdom of nature, as if it was gifted with consciousness (for all celestial stores were at this moment effulgent, and by their influx, as it were, announced their presence), excited by a kind of festivity, favoured and in their manner greeted this birthday. Choirs of celestial inhabitants concluded this scene, which

was the third, with the delicate vibrations of their lights, as so many tokens of gladness and approbation." (Nos. 32-38.)

The Fourth scene describes the Infancy of the First-begotten. It opens with a picture of a peaceful night in this primitive earth, on whose bosom lay this its first, most noble fruit.

"It was midnight, and the constellations of heaven, as if also about to applaud, now not only shone with brightness, but glittered with a kind of flaming beam. They were also ardent to prevent their setting, but the day dawn hastening to its rising dimmed their luster and instantly opened the gates of day for the rising sun. The inhabitants of heaven, as was observed, took their stations around, and by their flaming light prevented the rays of any other lumen from kindling the first spark of the light of his life, rejoicing also at the sight of an infant, the first-begotten and the hope of the whole human race, lying with his breast and face upward, and his tender hands folded and lifted up to heaven, moving also his little lips, as if he would venerate the Supreme Builder and his Parent, not in mind only, but by a certain posture and corresponding gesture of the body, under a species of the purest thanksgiving that the workmanship of the world was now complete in himself. He was naked, but encompassed with the mildest spring, as with a bath; so fair and of a countenance so beautiful, as if he were a Deity not born to mortal life."

A festival is celebrated by the celestial essences in celebration of this last day of creation. The infant's sensuous life and education is portrayed in detail and in wonderful language. He is described as living wholly as soul under the image of an infant clothed with a body; "for the soul saw the beauties of Paradise pellucid, through, as it were, her own eyes, not his; she delighted herself not from the harmonies of effects but from the delight of uses, and of the goodness contemplated in

them." The mystic company of the Intelligences and the Wisdoms are here introduced, and the infant is represented as conversing with them. The soul's Olympus and the Helicon of the senses are also most vividly portrayed, and an animated society is here depicted as if the world were peopled with myriads instead of a single human soul.

The Fifth scene treats of the love of the First-begotten ; and here the first idea of evil is introduced in the description of the two loves between which the soul is balanced. Here, too, is introduced the knowledge of the other or celestial paradise, the spiritual world and its celestial sun. The evil love is described as a kind of fallen Lucifer, afterward taking on, now the form of a Gorgon's head, and now of a fearful Cerberus, from which the First-begotten shrinks with fear. Consoled and protected by his accompanying wisdom, his fears are allayed. At length the wisdoms enter the Olympus, as brides the bride-chamber. "Lo ! Love himself holds the torch, and his wisdoms utter applause." Thus ends the Fifth scene.

The Sixth scene treats of the marriage of the First-begotten (No. 87), describing first the birth of the first woman and her education by the celestial intelligences, before her meeting with Adam. The origin of the first woman is not less remarkable than that of the first man ; her first creation seems to have been a beautiful conception in the mind of Adam, a dream and vision of beauty which causes a longing to clasp the fair but vanishing form to his bosom.

"The vehement agitation of his frame thus caused the distending of the nerves by the operation of the mind, and the blood in

the breast being set by the heart into violent commotion, all conduced to create the feeling that one of his ribs leaped out of its place. On awaking he finds this to have indeed been a dream, but in fact, the apple tree under which he was reposing carried, like his own maternal tree, a similar egg from which his future conjugal partner was to be born, and she it was whose image he had so eagerly courted in his sleep ; the branch at his breast lying in his bosom was what he embraced in his arms ; and the very egg itself was pressed with his lips and his kisses, and thus infused with a vital soul from his own."

The meeting of the first human pair is thus described (No. 110) :

"Whilst the first-begotten led a solitary paradisiacal life, and fed his mind at ease with the delights of the visible world, he recollects a thousand times that most beautiful nymph who, during his sleep, was seen by him in this grove ; wherefore a thousand times he turned his step thither, but always in vain.

"The idea of her, which was in consequence exalted, kindled such a fire as to inflame the inmost principles of his life, and thus to turn its tranquillity into care and anxiety. This ardour increased, even unto this day, on which it was appointed by the Divine Providence that this wound which lurked in his inmost veins, should be healed by enjoyment ; wherefore, whilst he now again meditated on the same path, he came even to the entrance of this grove, which was the only entrance, without mistaking his way. Rejoicing intensely at this circumstance, he hastened instantly to the midst of it, to the very tree under which he had so deliciously rested ; and seeing the couch there, the idea of his sleep so revived that he spied as with his eyes her very face. And whilst he was wholly intent on her image, and extended his sight a little further, lo ! he saw and acknowledged the very nymph herself, in the midst of the choir of intelligences ; at this sight he was in such emotion and so filled with love that he doubted a long time whether his sight did not deceive him ; but presently when the crowd of his thoughts was a little dispersed, it occurred to his mind that he was brought hither by the Divine Providence, and that this was the event of which previous notice was given him in

his sleep ; and that she it was whom heaven had marked out for him as a bride and a conjugal partner. I see clearly, said he, that she is mine, for she is from my own bosom, and from my own life. . . . The celestial intelligences beckoned to him with a nod to make his approach, and whilst he was leading the bride in his hand this scene was ended, which was the sixth in the theatre of this orb.”

The Seventh scene is what is comprised in the unpublished and untranslated Part III. It treats, as we have said, of the conjugal life of the first pair. It is, in other words, a wonderful portrayal of forms, spheres and fluxions, orbits, fires, colours and planets and clouds, used as types of the various loves and intelligences ; also as types of the various planes of the mind, the super-celestial or the soul, the celestial or internal mind, the infra-celestial or the animus. By their gyrations and fluxions are represented in a marvellous manner the heavenly life and the heaven of the Beloved, or of the Supreme Only-Begotten. The explanations of these representations constitute the discourse of Adam and Eve the first day after their nuptials. The book opens with a single number descriptive of the wooing and union of the first-begotten pair, beginning with these beautiful words which, it seems to us, were never surpassed in human writing in their lofty dignity combined with tenderness and grace :

“ *Cum jam Sola soli relicta fuit*”—

“ When now she alone was left to her only one.”

In the morning as they awake from a most sweet sleep upon the marriage bed, there appears in the mid-heaven a kind of effigy of the universe, consisting of a shining center of light from which radiate solar flames, shading off into a beautiful purple nimbus glittering with beauty and

splendour, transparent, tinged with Tyrian hues, a circle of gems. The description follows of the motions of these rays and spheres, and the first-begotten declares to his beloved the hidden meaning of this wonderful representation :

"The ends of ends is to be explained. The earth, with its triple kingdom, lives, not of or for its self, but for a prior end, namely, for a heaven and thus for the glory of the most wise Creator. Therefore all the orders of the universe conspire with this crown of all ends, that is with the Glory of God ; wherefore there is nothing in heaven or in the worlds, which does not bear an image of His Glory, for all mediate ends, regard and proclaim the ultimate. But for declaring most sacredly His Glory, all things and creation itself were ordained that there might be formed from human minds a celestial kingdom or a sacred society, of which as of one body, the Creator Himself should be the soul, and his First-born or his Only Love should actuate the mind, which in our bodies from the intellect and will is named the rational. The human body represented to us as produced from the great egg signified this."

The discourse explanatory of this representative vision concludes the Seventh or last scene of this wonderful drama, breaking off, however, abruptly as in the middle of a number, and thus lacking any fitting conclusion—except indeed it were thus providentially left unfinished, as if to indicate that the vision of the poet and seer is now lifted to a higher scene still, where not in mystic figures but in *things heard and seen* in all spiritual reality, he was to witness, at last, the true end of creation, a heaven of angels from the human race.

Regarding this wonderful production as a synthesis of the philosophical writings of Swedenborg, are we not entitled to carry our plans of division still further, and therefore, even in the fields of theology, or the revelations of angelic wisdom, look to find here again a period of

analytic studies followed by a grand final synthesis of spiritual principles? This expectation we believe is realized in the substantial classification of Swedenborg's theological writings, if not into the two successive chronological periods, at least into two kinds of teaching. The one, which we may call the analytic, consists of, first, the study of the particulars of the internal sense of the Word, and second, the record of "things heard and seen" in the spiritual world. These two are the sources which furnish the facts, or the material, so to speak, of which the great fabric of a genuine spiritual theology is subsequently built.

Belonging to the first division of the analytic class, we would therefore name the writings in which the internal sense of the Word is given—the *Arcana*, the *Summary Exposition*, and the *Apocalypse Explained*—to the second, the work on *Heaven and Hell*, on the *Last Judgment*, the *Earths in the Universe*, and the *Memorable Relations*. These two divisions we would embrace in the analytic class, and in fact we find them practically so treated by the author, the memorable relations and the descriptions of the spiritual world being actually inserted between the successive chapters of the Word in the exposition of the internal sense.

The other class, the synthetic, would embrace the works in which the principles are stated in a more general and abstract manner. These are the works entitled the *Doctrine of the Lord*, of *Life*, of the *Sacred Scriptures*, and of *Faith*; *Divine Love and Wisdom*, the *Divine Providence*, *Conjugal Love*, the *True Christian Religion*. These are all subsequent in their appearing to the analytic works above mentioned. As a nexus or a brief

synthesis of the analytic division leading into the more purely doctrinal series, we may regard the work entitled the *New Jerusalem and Its Heavenly Doctrine*, the chapters of which, as is known, are interspersed through the later volumes of the *Arcana*. The *Apocalypse Revealed* does indeed fall, according to its date, 1766, into the later or synthetic period, while its contents, according to our plan of classification, should place it in the analytic class. Its late appearing may, however, be accounted for on two grounds, viz., that it could only be written after the accomplishment of the *Last Judgment* (1757), and that it is, to a certain extent, a reproduction of the *Apocalypse Explained*, which was written, but not published, during the earlier or analytic period.

Having now examined the work before us in its relation to the other writings of the author, let us finally endeavour to arrive at a correct estimate of its actual scientific and theological import, and the degree of authority which is to be attached to the statements here made as to the mode of the origin of the earth and of man.

A writer in the *Words for the New Church*, in a passage quoted above, seems to regard the work as being synthetic, not in a scientific but in a spiritual or theological sense, namely, as containing something of the authority of a revelation. In support of this view, his quotations were made from the *Private Diary* of Swedenborg, or his *Book Dreams*. While we admit that these quotations throw a very interesting light on the character of the work, we think there is room for doubt as to the real intent of some of the passages quoted.

A much more significant testimony as to the real character of this work, is that which Swedenborg gives in his

introduction to his *History of Creation as Related by Moses*, commonly known as the *Adversaria*, Vol. i., written in 1745, thus after the full opening of his spiritual sight. Here he says: "The origin of the earth, Paradise, the nursery of the living, and the birth of Adam, were discussed in Part First of my treatise on the *Worship and Love of God*. That work, however, was written under the leadership of the understanding, or according to the thread of reason. As human intelligence, however, cannot be trusted in any respect unless it be inspired by God, therefore it becomes necessary, in the interest of truth, to compare what has been laid down in the above-named work, with the revelation in the Sacred Scriptures, and in the present case with the history of creation as revealed by God to Moses, and thus to examine carefully how far they agree; for whatever does not harmonize thoroughly with revelation must be declared to be altogether false, or the insane product of our rational mind." Two most interesting and remarkable conclusions follow from these statements, viz.: That Swedenborg does not here class the work as coming under the domain of revelation, but emphatically states the necessity of comparing it as a product of the understanding alone, with the true standard of the revealed Word; secondly, that the account of creation in his own work is not represented as being suggested by, or derived from, the account in Genesis, but that having been first written by the "thread of reason," it is now brought to the test of comparison with that account.

What now is the result of the comparison as actually made by Swedenborg? After a brief exposition of the meaning of Genesis i. as scientifically viewed, according to Swedenborg's insight at that period, he says:

"When now I have carefully compared these accounts [meaning the account in Genesis and his own in the *Worship and Love of God*], I have wondered at their agreement (*miratus sum concordentiam*) ; for first in that little work I have treated of a universal chaos, or the grand egg of the universe, which contained in itself heaven and earth, according to Gen. i. 23. Then of the planets and the earth, that in their beginnings they were likewise unformed bodies, or crude masses, and that the ethereal atmosphere had not yet begun to exist, which transmits the solar rays, consequently that there was no universe, but mere vacuity and emptiness, and thence mere darkness. Then the true ether arising, which in Scripture is everywhere called the Divine Spirit, these circumfused masses were converted into a globe according to verse 2. That they began to rotate about axes, and thus to produce days with their evenings and mornings, according to verses 3, 4, 5 ; then that the aerial atmosphere was produced, according to verses 6, 7, 8. That this primitive globe was at first fluid, but clothed itself with a crust and so became an earth, according to verses 9, 10 ; and that this terrestrial surface first produced grass, then trees, smaller and larger, according to verses 9-13 ; that times originated in the annual revolutions of the earth about the sun, according to verses 14-19 ; afterward, that insects or worms were produced, that is, the smaller animalcula, and afterward the birds and fishes, according to verses 21-23 ; then the various kinds of animals, according to verses 24, 25. At length man is created into the Divine Image, according to verses 26, 27 ; and many other facts are adduced which are contained in the premised history of creation and the commentary thereon."—*Adversaria*, Part I. Vol. i. p. 7.

Further on, in commenting on the 7th verse, "Jehovah God formed man, dust from the earth," Swedenborg says :

"That is his body, his flesh and bones, with the corporeal part of the blood, or whatever does not possess life, but rather is actuated by life, for the soul is derived from heaven. Whether he was formed immediately from the earth, and thus did not pass through the states from infancy to youth, or whether immediately from an egg, and thus onward, the reader may conclude at his option ; since indeed one day means an entire space of time or the lapse of many

years, man could also have been born from an egg, and this egg not formed immediately from the ground, but mediately through the fibers of some vegetable object or tree by which the essences which were to enter into his blood might be purified. If this were the process, *man was none the less formed* from the dust of the earth, for whatever comes through the roots and fibers of vegetables is from the earth."—*Adversaria*, Part i. Vol. i. p. 40.

Again, in regard to the creation of woman, Swedenborg thus comments on Gen. ii. verses 21, 23 :

"*'Wherefore Jehovah God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept, and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which Jehovah God had taken from man made He a woman, and brought her to man.'*" That the taking out of the rib and the closing up of the flesh in its place was only a kind of dream, or that it seemed to take place in a dream, that one of his ribs leaped forth and that the flesh was supplied in the place, is not so unreasonable a supposition : for that the woman was taken from him is sufficiently evident from the sacred words and from verse 23, 'This is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh ; she shall be called woman because she was taken out of man.' That is, sprung from his blood, from his spirit and soul. Then also it may be demonstrated that this did not take place in the garden of Adam himself, but elsewhere, because it is said that 'the woman was brought to him.'

From these quotations it is evident that Swedenborg, while holding that his theory of man's being originally produced from an egg, borne on a tree, is neither inconsistent with the Scriptures nor with reason, was still very careful not to declare this as a statement carrying any more authority with it than its own reasonableness. "Fides sit penes lectorem," "*Let the reader believe as he chooses,*" in deciding between the production of man instantaneously from the ground, or mediately by the forces of the vegetable egg. Whether he would have extended this

option to the modern evolutionists' theory of the birth from the ape-mother is seriously to be doubted. That such an alternative as another possible mode of man's origin is never mentioned by Swedenborg, is a strong presumption against any attempt to reconcile such a theory with either his philosophical or theological teachings.

To pronounce upon the precise scientific value of the account of creation, particularly of the extraordinary account of the origin of man and woman as given in the work before us, was not the purpose, were it in the province of the present writer. Without entering into discussion of this vast theme, suffice it to say, that, granted any evolution proceeding from Divine origin and cause, and especially one which evolves from the mineral the vegetable, and from the vegetable the animal, there is at least nothing *contrary to sound reason and analogy* in the birth of the first man directly from the vegetable egg, impregnated by the Divine Spirit, any more than in his gradual development from a lower order of animated being, which was, however, so produced in the beginning. While, on the other hand, there is much, both in analogy and in reason, not to speak of the moral instincts of the human soul, that will find the theory here broached by Swedenborg much more satisfactory and more helpful in a study of nature from a truly human standpoint than that which derives man from a lower animal.

That the theory has at present hardly come to be whispered abroad, and then perhaps only to be laughed at by the leaders in present science, is not a consideration so much against it, as perhaps in its favour, since any conclusion formed by a science whose chief boast is that it has eliminated God from nature, may be safely entertained

only with the gravest suspicions; whereas Swedenborg and his theory can well afford to wait a few hundred, or a thousand years, if need be, confident that his foundations are sound at least, and that the light of more extended research may elucidate, but can hardly obliterate, the lines of an argument so logical, so exact, and so comprehensive as is that of his philosophical system.

As to his own estimate of his work, we cannot see wherein it differs in the least from that of the other works which preceded it in the great series. It is, as he says, "a work of the understanding constructed by the thread of reason." Such was the *Principia*, such were the *Economy* and the *Animal Kingdom*. In the same category with these must we place this wonderful work which crowns the whole, as the creation of Man and Paradise crowns the creative week. In this, the Drama of Creation, which began with the "First Natural Point" in the *Principia*, reaches its majestic close. If the language is more poetic, and the thought more imaginative, the grand outline of the unique, logical plan, the magnificent scheme of orders, series, degrees, ends, means, and uses, is still everywhere distinctly seen. The philosopher becomes a poet in creating a world hitherto unknown, but it is a world which has in its structure all we know or perhaps ever shall know of the laws of Divine order and harmony and perfect adaptation of means to ends, and a world which the more we study the more we shall come to find not a temporary, transient structure of fancy, but a creation as eternal as the Logos itself, from which it derives its being.

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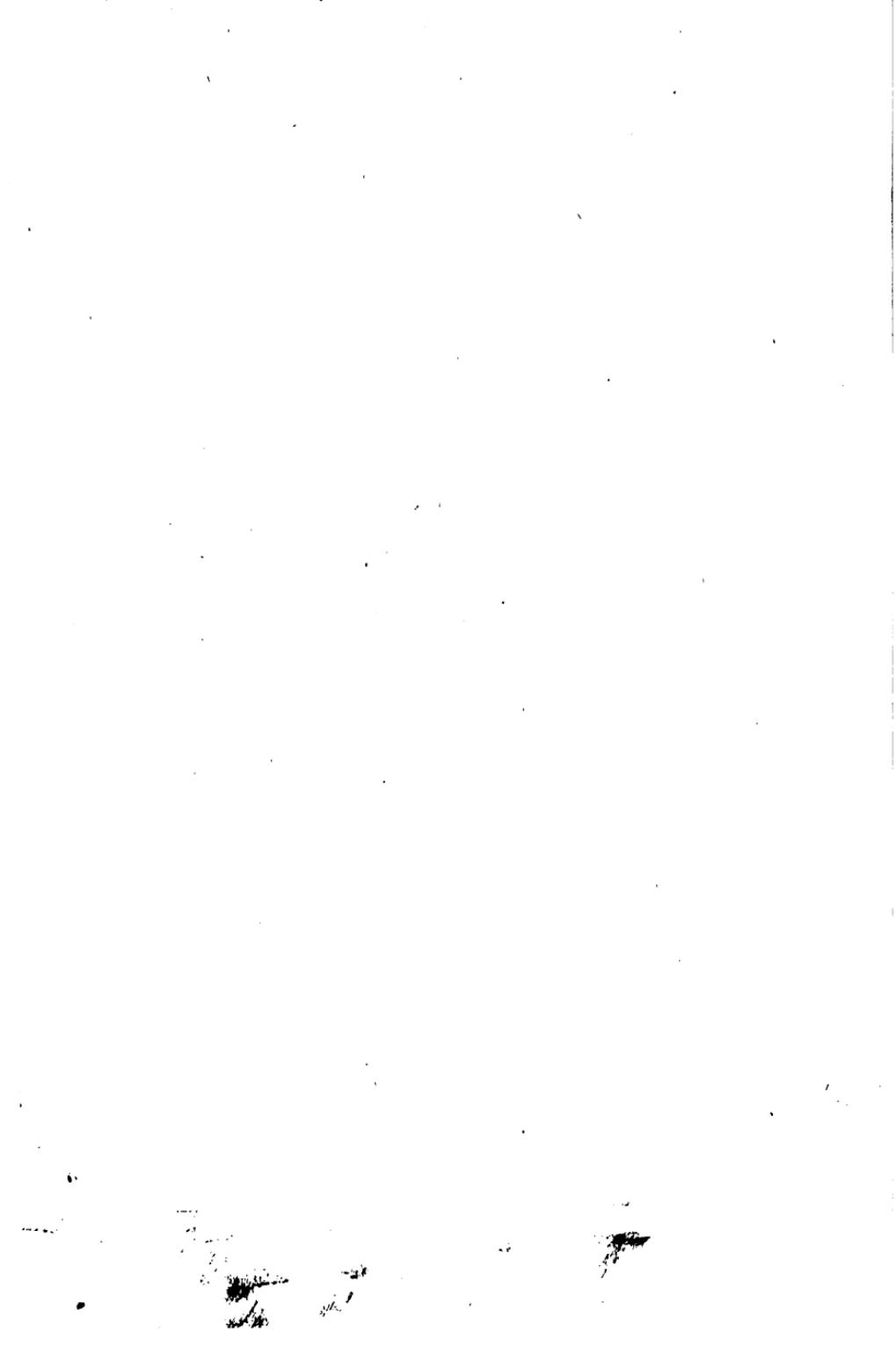
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